

H23 #3

the minimal(ism) issue

four dollars



**Editor** Ron Rice

**Contributors** William Benson,  
Ben Gilbert, Cole Harris,  
Mason Jones, Ron Rice,  
Jim O'Rourke, Tentatively, A  
Convenience, Anton Viergever,  
Frans de Waard, Rotcod Zzaj

**Layout, Typesetting** Ron Rice

**Advertising Coordinator** Ron Rice

**Business Management** Ron Rice/  
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## **Editorial**

### **A true, full editorial**

### **Not an editorial**

The void. The lowest amount, value or degree attained or recorded. Equal attention to negative space. White space. Black space. Sounded space. Silent space. The value of a function at a certain point in its domain, which is less than or equal to the values at all other points in the immediate vicinity of the point. Openness and clarity. Air. Sparseness. Least possible under the given circumstances. A breath. A canvas. Acknowledgement of the listener/viewer and the space of hearing/seeing. Delicate and/or diminutive. Smallness, insignificance. Largeness. A short attack, a long sustain, and a short decay. A pair of words, such as pin and bin, differing only by one sound in the same position in each word, especially when such a pair is taken as evidence for the existence of a phonological contrast between the two sounds. A long attack, a short sustain, and a long decay. Naturalness. Honesty. A little finger or toe. The horizon line. Presence. Absence.

All of these things, some of these things, and none of these things.

Ron Rice, December, 1991



**PBK**

interview by Ron Rice

**PBK** is an acronym for **Phillip B. Klinger**, a simplification of his name which he's used for years. He was born in 1960 in Flint, Michigan. He studied aesthetics and art history at Michigan University and also attended California State University at San Bernardino. He began drawing comic books in high school and had drawings printed in early issues of **The Comics Journal** and other fanzines. Later he pursued painting and applied visual arts and exhibited in many group shows, most notably the **All-California Biennial Exhibition** in 1986. He began mail-art activities later that year.

Aural experimentation started in late '86 with a simple Casio SK-1. Seeing the possibilities for extended applications of sound resulted in expansion. His current studio includes Roland S-220 and Akai S-612 samplers, Yamaha DX, Casio CZ, Roland Juno (rack), Minimoog/Moog Source, Roland SH-101, Korg MS-20, et cetera. All units are run from sequences and recorded on a Ross 4x4 cassette four track and mixed to master on a JVC three-head cassette deck.

He began releasing cassettes in 1987. He has collaborated with **Jeph Jerman (Hands To, Blowhole, City of Worms)**, **Dirk Serries (Vidna Obmana)**, **Asmus Tiechens**, and **Tim Vickers (Deaf Lions)**. Recent and upcoming releases include a CD on **Daniel Plunkett's ND** label, a collaboration with **Asmus Tiechens** on **Jon Booth's Realization Records**, and a solo LP on **Freedom in a Vacuum**.

The following "interview" was pieced together from several months of correspondence. The subject of minimalism came up early on...

**PBK:** "I've thought a lot about it, and I agree with your statement that the term "minimalism" is applied to a very limited range of composers. There are obvious uses of minimalism by the composers we are all familiar with--**Reich, Riley, Glass**, et cetera--but there are many others who work with these elements in other ways. **Vidna Obmana** uses repeated patterns of slowly moving musics juxtaposed against one another to form his ambient pieces. **Brian Eno's** pieces come to mind (**Music for Airports**). **John Hudak's** works continue unchanged for thirty minutes or so, but somehow avoid being entirely static. In other words, it is nonsense to say that the only minimalists are those that proclaim their intentions as such, right? Often, musics are highly repetitious and/or minimal in instrumentation, tonal colour, et cetera, but there is no pretense there of creating "minimal" music."

**H23:** "For years your main mode of expression was painting, and you have expressed a desire to sonically deal with visual elements/terminology. Can you elaborate on that?"

**PBK:** "My intention has been to explore aesthetic questions which have been previously studied in my painted works, to apply those problems to the realm of sound, and clearly the two areas have correlations. However, my use of terminology



relating to the visual arts in reference to my soundwork is actually a necessity. I haven't any formal training in music, therefore I make reference to such concepts as 'form', 'line', 'space', 'density', 'colour', 'tone', 'figure/ground relationships', et cetera. These terms are applicable within both realms. Certainly I'm not the first to note the similarities, nor is the idea of 'sculpting', or 'painting' with sound an original one. Still, my aesthetic lies firmly in the visual arts and I pursue my soundwork from this angle."

H23: "What correlations do you see between your soundwork and Abstract Expressionist painting, especially the arguably "minimal" work of Rothko (whom you mentioned in a letter)?"

PBK: "Well, paint in its raw form--pigment--is in itself abstract. The only reference we can make to it is its consistency or colour. Only when it is placed colour against colour, pattern against pattern, do we begin to form a response, usually based on memory, to the overall composition. The first wave of Abstract Expressionist painters created a form the interpretation of which relied very little on memory or preconceptions. Thoughts, feelings and emotions could be conveyed in their purest form. The "Color-Field" painters, in particular Mark Rothko, expressed a formal interest in creating a new language of painting, "silent but (with) intense expression." This is a minimalism of sorts, yet there is an inherent complexity to these paintings which belies simplistic interpretation...

The problem with sound is that it always refers to its own origins. When we hear a sound, we identify it and place it into context based on our memories. It is only with great difficulty that one can compose sounds or patterns of sound that are unrecognizable, abstract and pure. In my own work it is the use of "noise" elements which, I feel, allows me to bypass the musical preconceptions that are built into the listener's psyche. Also, my method of working--a kind of "psychic automatism", relates closely to Abstract Expressionism, and earlier, Surrealism. What I am searching for is the purest expression of my subconscious state of mind, and this can only be found through the use of completely abstract structures. Minimal perhaps, but intensely expressive.

H23: "In keeping with the notion of "psychic automatism", do you improvise direct to tape without composing or previewing sound patterns?"

PBK: "Yes, I do improvise (direct to sequencer), and I test the sound elements that I am considering incorporating into the piece. But this is all done rather quickly and indiscriminately. All options are considered, some patterns are discarded, but there is little forethought involved in the process. As I build up the layers of sound, the piece may begin to emerge and reveal itself. Just as often though, nothing comes of it all, and the work must be abandoned."

H23: "How about the sounds themselves? Do you "build" timbres with certain characteristics in mind, or do you manipulate "real" sounds?"



**PBK:** "To some degree, both. With sampling, I manipulate existing sounds, often quite radically. With my synthesizers though, I generally do not have the time to create new patches, so I have a large number of sounds that I've created earlier stored in memory banks. As I am working, I can go through these sounds very quickly and incorporate them if they seem to fit."

**H23:** "Your work is often densely layered. Do you develop one track at a time, creating subsequent tracks based on the forms of previous ones? Or do you improvise live using many devices simultaneously?"

**PBK:** "I start by sequencing the first track, usually a long sample, and then another, and then another. Once I get the basic sequence set up, I run it in a repeating loop. As it runs I develop the mix and the spatial/timbral movement. It is not so important, the characteristics of individual sound elements, because each element loses much of its identity as the wall-of-noise is built up. Also, by selecting the patterns spontaneously, at random, I allow chance to play a role in the characteristics of the composition. Finally, when I am ready to record down to the master tape, I run off my instruments and do the mix live. Sending it straight from the sequence to the master eliminates the compromised sound quality of overdubs."

**H23:** "I am trying to better understand your mode of operation as it relates to your intentions. Allow me to play devil's advocate with regard for your concern for "pure subconscious expression." Certainly when we choose where to begin or end a loop, or when to fade in a low frequency hum, or how to counterbalance a particularly aggressive passage, we are making conscious compositional decisions. How do you work within and/or around conscious decision-making? Do such actions defeat the purpose of automatism?"

**PBK:** "Undoubtedly, the best of intentions may be thwarted by physical limitations. With automatism, which is possibly the most important concept to come out of the Surrealist movement, the artist is the recipient--there to "record" impressions, not to "add". Yet even the Surrealist writers, using methods of automatic writing, could not avoid converting the "thought" into "word", and then physically writing it down. There's bound to be some compromise in the translation. Some painters have been able to exploit techniques of automatism by using dripped, splashed or pooled paint, but there is still the aesthetic judgement of the artist in creating each piece that limits adherence to conceptual purity. It's true for myself as well.

I attempt to overcome these limitations by setting obstacles in my own path. For instance, by completing each piece in only one sitting, I limit myself the luxury of time. Decisions must be made quickly. Also, any reliance on methods which are "tried and true" is continually foiled by forcing myself to work differently each time. I often change my studio configuration so I won't get too familiar



or comfortable with one set-up. In the end, it is probably impossible to work outside of conscious restrictions. But in my search for an art that is true to the spirit and breaks down the walls of mystification, I haven't found a simpler or more beautiful notion than psychic automatism."

**H23:** "I understand and respect your desire to bypass listener preconceptions to get to the bottom of "pure sound experience". However, many of your listeners will place your work within the context of industrial music, or post-industrial music, because it resembles such work they are familiar with. How do you feel your work relates to other musics, and how do you suggest we bypass these preconceptions?"

**PBK:** "A difficult question. First, I make no assumptions about the categories in which a listener might place my work. It really makes no difference to me. I am aware that the term "industrial" has been applied to almost any music that utilizes noise elements, but I never thought the term was appropriate for most of the music that was associated with it. With regard to my own work, it is particularly inappropriate. I'm not exploring the aesthetic of machine industries, and I think the idea is really boring.

My music does not follow convention, cannot be understood in conventional ways, so I understand the difficulty for many people; their sensibilities cannot operate outside of categorization. But if people can open up and accept the music on its own terms, then the listener and I can begin an active and involved dialogue. As for the question of transcending one's own preconceptions, I have no answer. I continue to make art that interests me, and if only a few want to come along for the ride, that's fine."

**H23:** "Are you a religious man? I'm asking because even your most intense work maintains a certain zen-like meditative flow. Is there a spiritual element?"

**PBK:** "I cannot accept religious dogma, yet I've always been fascinated and deeply moved by expressions of spirituality. Whether it be the music of **John Coltrane**, **Van Morrison**, **Diamanda Galas**, or even Bulgarian choir music, it is the element of exploring intangibles that is most interesting. If my own work contains something that seems to be dealing with universals--life, death, love, hate, questions of existence, morality, ethics--then I can easily see how you could relate that to religion or spirituality. But always at the root of my aesthetic exploration is the search for "reality" and the move away from "mystification".

**End.**

**PBK**  
115 W. 33rd  
San Bernardino, CA 92405  
U.S.A.



## **PBK Tapeography:**

Solo recordings: Narcosis (1990, PBK Recordings), Thrill Pictures, Volumes 1 and 2 (1990, Freedom in a Vacuum), A Noise Supreme (1989, PBK), Appeal (1989, PBK), Asesino (1988, Nihilistic), Die Brucke (1988, PBK), Vivisection (1988, PBK), Poetry and Motion, archival recordings, early '87 (1988, PBK), Tonguespeak (1987, deleted), Descent (1987, PBK).

Collaborative recordings: Melachoir, with **Hands To** (1989, PBK), Verfall, with **Hands To** (1989, Sound of Pig), Forming Mankind in My Own Image, with **Deaf Lions** (1990, PBK), Shamanistic, with **Deaf Lions** (1989, Interrupt Prod.), Compositions: Depression and Ideal, with **Vidna Obmana** (1989, PBK), Monument of Empty Colours, with **Vidna Obmana** (1989, Decade Collection).

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## **Melody**

by **tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE**  
february, 1991(ev)

Melody (temporarily defined as a sequence of distinguishable pitches) is often emphasized as "essential" for the making of "Music" (temporarily defined as an organization of sound for, at least partially, "esthetic" purposes). To paraphrase composer **Christian Wolff**, melody may even be largely "inescapable" as long as it exists conceptually, because most, if not all, sequences can be imagined within its context. For example, starting with the premise that what is perceived as a distinguishable pitch varies with the perceiver's ability to distinguish, a hypothetical listener might hear a "texturally dense" sound in which the "main" change that establishes a "sequence" may be something as subtle as the changing of one harmonic only as a "melody" (the definition of "one harmonic" is too much to discuss for our purposes) while another listener might perceive the same sound as undifferentiated "noise". Therefore if one accepts that a "distinguishable pitch" can be any sound (or ultimately, anything), any sequence can be accepted (or heard, felt, whatever) as a **Melody**. Of course some people will "understandably" be opposed to this reduction (or expansion) of "melody" to a synonym of "sequence", maintaining that the word must be more specific in order to retain any value.



ANYWAY, I'm more interested in organizing sound for non-"esthetic" purposes. Hence I use the term **"Usic"** (or **"Usi(")** to describe most of my constructions of sound. I'm more interested in getting away from musical concepts as much as possible in order to encourage the listener to rethink the structures they impose on their hearing, such as calling something a "melody" as only one of an infinite number of potential "callings". However, taking into consideration the idea expressed in my loose paraphrase of **Christian Wolff**, I have become somewhat fascinated with exploring the "sophisticated", "imaginative" musician's ability to perceive sequences within the cohering concept of "melody". It is as a challenge to this ability that the following melod(y/ies) has been composed.

#### **Melody #1**

Introduce this melody with the above preface. Play one distinguishable and constant unit of sound in which no pitch or tone change can be heard (ideally). This sound can be "short" or "long" (etc.). Explain that the next part of the melody will be played ten years later. Create a mailing list of all the audience members (those willing to be included) present at the playing of the first "note" of the melody. Try to stay in contact with these entities. Notify them of the date/time/place of the playing of the second "note" of this melody (enough in advance to give them all sufficient chance to attend the playing of the second "note", but not so far in advance that they will have forgotten about it by the time the playing occurs). Try to play the second "note" exactly ten years after the playing of the first "note", with further mention of the "history" of this melody (elaborate on or drastically vary the original preface). Don't restrict the audience to the original audience. Repeat the same procedure for the third and fourth "notes", etc.. If you desire to have this melody "outlive" you, make arrangements to have the presentation of the melody occur in spite of your "death". Record the melody. Recording can be accomplished in various way, including recording the "notes" "back to back", recording the "notes" and "everything" in between them, recording the "notes" only, but not "back to back" (that is, separating the "notes" with "blank" recordings), etc..

#### **Melody #2**

Same as Melody #1, with intervals between "notes" being one month.

#### **Melody #3**

Same as Melody #1, with intervals between "notes" being one week.

#### **Melody #4**

Same as Melody #1, with intervals between "notes" being any interval that seems to serve the purpose of encouraging the perceiver to cohere units that they might not ordinarily join together due to the difficulty of "grasping" the interval.

**ETC.**



**John Hudak**

interview by Frans de Waard

**John Hudak** is, according to **Electronic Cottage** magazine (issue #3), a veteran home taper. His audio works are widely available, but less known are his works as a visual and performance artist. Throughout all of these activities, minimalist concepts play a central role. His audio releases on cassette are usually comprised of two thirty minute pieces that utilize very few sounds. On a superficial level, the sounds seem to continue unchanged for the entire duration of the piece. But they do change. At least sometimes. The following interview centers on Hudak's thoughts about minimalism...

**de Waard:** "What is your aesthetic interest in minimalism? Why do you use it?"

**Hudak:** "My interest lies in the apparent minimalism of everyday repeated natural sounds. Numerous sounds in nature repeat for extended lengths of time, but we are not often in situations where we are able to hear these sounds for extended lengths of time due to environmental obstacles or lack of patience. For instance, a bird may sit and sing for a good length of time in the country, but in the city she may be disturbed by cars, trucks, people, et cetera. Extended listening is hampered. This is my basic focus at the moment--to present natural extended situations on tape using naturally produced and lightly altered sounds. Maybe one could call it "conscious-raising lengths of tape", maybe "environmental" tapes. It was very funny that the latest tape I released through **Banned Productions** titled **Slumbrous Breathing**, which consisted of lightly treated cricket sounds (actually one solo cricket and a field of others behind), was negatively described in a magazine review as being just a short tape loop repeated for each side of a 60 minute tape. If the reviewer would have counted the number of chirps on the half speed side, he would have realized that the number of chirps varied, but hovered around an average number as chirping crickets do...as this real cricket did. So the minimalism of real life is exemplified by an impatient listener who has no time for real sounds."

**de Waard:** "What is your reaction to people who regard minimalism as boring and without any ideas?"

**Hudak:** "That is a valid response. People who do not understand or do not want to understand situations often consider these things boring. My favorite saying is that one is bored prior to understanding--that being bored is a preliminary response to a breakthrough in understanding. Being bored is also a symptom of a person who is empty of ideas--one who is asleep--which is the case of most of the population of the world (myself included). Waking up is the state one can achieve with a lot of work."

**de Waard:** "Your work has been described as "post-minimalism". How is your work a development of older forms of minimalism?"



**Hudak:** "The term "post-minimalism" was coined by a friend of mine who, for lack of a handy label, described my music as such. I've listened to a lot of what is called "Minimalist" music, and I find it quite interesting. But it's not really where my work comes from. I have been more influenced by the musique concrete and electro-acoustic musics. It's unfortunate that people categorize and label things in order to file them back into their memories and put them out of the front of their minds. Minimalism has been around since the stone age. Only the label is new."

**de Waard:** "Do you have any interest in works by **Steve Reich**, **Phil Niblock**, or any of that?"

**Hudak:** "I enjoy **Steve Reich's** work quite a bit. I'd say my favorite pieces are **Drumming** and **Violin Phase**. He is very adept at creating interesting patterns of sound and interesting juxtapositions. I don't care for his most recent work, because it seems he has moved on to a more mainstream, mediocre sound. I've only heard a little bit of **Phil Niblock's** work, about five years ago. It was very stunning. He played some of his extended trombone drone pieces that are somewhat like the half tone wavering things that **Alvin Lucier** does (where two tones are sounded in a relationship to one another that causes a beating effect). He used these sounds in quadraphonic as a background to travel films he shot in some tropical situation. The colors were vibrant. I remember wondering if he had included the visuals to keep people from becoming bored. That's quite an interesting thing to do--to provide a repetition as well as a changing stimulus. The changing stimulus becomes the focus, the repetitive element fades to the background. This is where repetition can become powerful."

**de Waard:** "Do you use minimalist concepts in all your works, music, painting and performance?"

**Hudak:** "I use a minimum of ideas in all my work, so that the idea can be transferred to the audience with the least amount of confusion. My paintings and drawings are usually very simple. I am drawn to the Abstract Expressionist label, perhaps more to the primitive/naive label when it comes to visual works. The terms imply "feeling" or a part of ones "life" or "memory". My performances are usually simple in similar ways. The pieces are usually long and involve simple actions in repetition...an environment or feeling...a simple feeling...although feelings are not often simple."

**End.**

**John Hudak** has released many tapes on many labels. A selective list: Haus, Significant Building, Halls, Tentative Voices, Toltec Holiday, Bee Collection, Haunt, Hindustani and Remorse, Audrey Tarkovsky/Flat Surface, Blackening, Moverhead, Think, Tomorrow Rings, Wind Rain and Cloud to Human Beings, Brain Box, Emerald Tablets, For Ivan who is not Ivan, How Time Passes, Momentumless Identity, Dweller



in the Gulf, The Clockmaker, The Last Horseman, and Slumbrous Breathing.

He has worked in collaboration with many sound artists including **Jeph Jerman, Minoy, Larry Wendt, 1348, If Bwana, Mystery Hearsay, Frans de Waard, Ios Smolders, Masami Akita** and **Chris Phinney**. All works can be ordered from John Hudak directly.

**John Hudak**

P.O.Box 7784

Philedelphia, PA 19101-7784

U.S.A.

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**Remko Scha**

**(and The Machines)**

interview by Frans de Waard

In 1982 an interesting record was released by both Dutch **Kremlin Records** and the American **Neutral** (a.k.a. the "**Glen Branca** label")--"**Machine Guitars**" by **Remko Scha**. On this record we hear eight pieces with machines that are playing guitars. Scha composed the music by controlling the machines (played by steel brushes). One would expect the total to be monotonous, but in fact the repeated manipulation of the strings produced overtones and an ever-changing rhythm, comparable in part to Branca's guitar music.

Who is Remko Scha? He started to make music in the early 60's, organizing happenings with the **New Electric Chamber Music Ensemble**. Many would go on stage and play their own music without noting anybody else performing, and so it happened that people met on stage for the first time. By the early 70's Scha was no longer interested in Happenings and began to develop his machine guitar installations (which existed earlier in different form as part of the **New Electric Chamber Music**).

Punk rock created an important environment for the presentation of Scha's work. His debut performance was in the New York **TR3** club, as a support act to the **Glen Branca Band**. Since then he has performed extensively at many festivals, art galleries and rock clubs.

Scha's recent installations incorporate sabre saws. These saws, interconnected by ropes, play guitars while Scha controls variable speeds and the p.a. system, improvising with each new concert. Last year a compact disc was released by **Staalplaat** with six new pieces totalling 70 minutes. In addition to creating installations, Scha is concerned with computer linguistics, the subject of his professorship at the University of Amsterdam.

In late March of 1991 Scha presented an installation



at **Galerie Geert Schriever** in Amsterdam; this was my first opportunity to see The Machines live. I immediately noted the new tonalities if the sabre saws (they do not appear on the recordings) which add an interesting element to the music. The near two-hour performance was overwhelming: sometimes very soft and gentile, sometimes loud and harsh, but always swinging with rhythms...a fascinating experience! After the concert I talked with Remko about his current activities...

**de Waard:** "What was the reason for waiting so long to release a new recording?"

**Scha:** "The reason for the "delay" was that I was in the United States for four years, at **Bolt Beranek and Newman** in Cambridge, Massachusetts for my research in computer linguistics. I did continue my artistic activities there, but it just didn't lead to a release. It's very hard for me to release anything, with the small market and the difficult distribution."

**de Waard:** "What are the differences between the LP and the CD, as some pieces sound rather the same?"

**Scha:** "One difference is that the CD has longer tracks; they are of a more complex structure and have more variation within each track. They still don't contain the complexity of live performance, because it is very difficult to record. My recordings are always live, but taped from the mixing desk. I tried to do a "live" recording in the space itself, but the sabre saws made a terrible hiss on the tape. I still haven't worked out how to record such a complex live situation."

**de Waard:** "Then why don't you use dubbing?"

**Scha:** "Well, dubbing doesn't fit the concept of The Machines, although it is natural to think of that. However, recently someone asked me about the possibility of sampling my guitar pieces. It seems an interesting experience, and I don't disapprove."

**de Waard:** "Some say your work is minimal. What is your interest in minimalism in the historical sense?"

**Scha:** "I think one can distinguish several historical lines of minimalism. One is what I call the "classical" line, utilizing repeating patterns and classical notation. Examples are **Steve Reich** and **Philip Glass**. Then there is the **LaMonte Young** line. They work with one tone, emphasizing overtones rather than pattern. From this line comes a third, early 80's line, including **Branca**, **Rhys Chatham** and myself. My initial interest was to develop an "ugly" sound, compatible with the punk rock attitude. I wanted a "BOOM BOOM" rhythm with a formal structure, and I thought a guitar played by a machine might give me such a rhythm. But instead it gave me a swinging sound. It turned out to be much more complex



than I had expected, and I'm still amazed by what it can do."

**de Waard:** "There was once the idea to work with the percussion of Z'ev. Why didn't that work out, and why don't you incorporate other instruments?"

**Scha:** "I did some recordings of my machines with Z'ev's percussion, but it only gave me the metallic sound I was already getting from my guitars. This happened with other instruments I have tried. Of course I explored many possibilities, but they were never satisfying. Because I don't tune my guitars (individually or as a whole), they give this metallic sound which I like very much."

**de Waard:** "I have seen your installation/concert here this afternoon in this art gallery. You used to perform in rock clubs as well. Are you still interested in that, or are you attracting a different audience now?"

**Scha:** "Yes I have worked in both rock 'n roll clubs and art galleries. I established the **Apollo Huis** in 1980, where both visual and music artists could present their work, but I have also played in rock clubs. The audiences that I reach will come to both places. They generally don't care that much where I am. I have interacted with people who come from a rock 'n roll tradition (although they would possibly deny that) like **Joop van Brakel** (member of the long defunct group, **Nasdmak-FdW**). He and I collaborated on projects where my machines manipulated his self-built guitars."

**de Waard:** "Punk music was a great influence. How do you see it now, and how do you compare it to popular music nowadays?"

**Scha:** "I think that rock 'n roll is less lively at the moment, compared to the situation ten years ago. I was very much into punk rock and what followed--the industrial noise music, but I was more interested in the mentality than the results. It was an inspiring force for me. Hip Hop and Acid are not as interesting as punk was, but I see possibilities in that as well, especially with my research in computer linguistics. I'd like to use computer language in Hip Hop and Acid, and possibly other music."

**de Waard:** "In the program book of **"Anti Qua Musica"** (an exhibition of musical instruments and installations with **Cage, Stockhausen, Kagel**, et cetera) you wrote an article in which you say that current music theory is inadequate. What should a more adequate music theory consist of?"

**Scha:** "Old theory is based on an abstract system, the classical notation system in which time, pitch, loudness, et cetera are suggested. It's a pity that people like **John Cage** who are against this system take it seriously. Although Cage is the greatest example for doing the kind of work that I'm doing, I think he is wrong here. I believe a new musical



theory should direct our attention to a material reality-collisions of things. The perception of the listener does play a role, and this is an area traditional composers neglect. I currently have post-graduates working on an academic foundation in this area. We are searching for it, and it may take ten years to get anything more definite."

**End.**

Scha's discography includes the previously mentioned out-of-print LP and the CD, still available. Also recorded was a tape included in the magazine **Artzien** and a tape called **"Guitar Mural 1"** on **Corps de Garde**, both out of print. Scha's music can also be found on the following compilations: **Just Another Asshole** (LP), **Indecent Exposure** (double cassette on **Plurex**), **De Appel** (cassette by **De Appel**, an art initiative in Amsterdam), **Dutch Difficult Music** (LP on **Eksakt**), and **Tellus 22-False Phonemes** (cassette by **Tellus** magazine).

**Remko Scha**

c/o Van Lagestein Digital Arts  
P.O.Box 11366  
1001 GJ Amsterdam  
Netherlands

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## **"The Homeric Dialogues"**

by William Benson

a poetry/performance piece

Each of the six "Homeric Dialogues" are for two speaking voices, a dancer/gymnast, and a percussionist.

The speaking voices appear, without parentheses, in the left and right columns. Both speak in a soft, conversational tone. There should be no effort to "project", but any emotions engendered in the reading should not be avoided.

Directions for the dancer/gymnast appear in parentheses in the left column. Emotions are to be pantomimed as conventional tableaux. If any of the notated calisthenics are impractical or not in the performer's repertoire, other physical actions may be substituted.

The percussionist's part appears in parentheses in the right column. Notated are various objects to be played. Sound, rather than gesture, is to be emphasized.

The two columns do not alternate, but are to be read/performed simultaneously. Each dialogue consists of 100 lines. Commas appear at every tenth line for structural reference. Each line equals 3". A dash is silence. Each dialogue has a total duration of five minutes.

William Benson  
July-August 1990



# Homeric Dialogue 1

Accomplished	--
--	(rattle)
it passes away	--
(love)	from the meadow
endurable	--
--	(duck whistle)
--	sweet-smelling, fragrant
both day and night	--
(back somersault)	--
, --	, lie down to sleep
begins an introduction	--
--	glorious
--	--
(pleasure)	(chirp whistle)
agonized at heart	--
--	shameless
--	--
--	(large handbell)
silent	--
, (grief)	, remiss
--	(duck whistle)
(front somersault)	--
--	overpowering force
--	--
before the dust	--
--	pause between whiles
(abdominal role)	--
impossible changes	--
--	(cow bell)
, --	, blazing heart
darkness	--
(confusion)	--
--	(Medium woodblock)
the sense of sound	twang of a bow string
--	(ratchet)
--	the source
shouting out	--
--	--
(anger)	--
, very seldom	, duly becoming
--	--
(melancholy)	consume
construction of the art	--
--	careful, excellent
--	(cuckoo whistle)
in supplication	--
(hand-stand)	--
--	steel-blue
--	(triangle)
, --	, red-cheeked



glories of the dance	--
(joy)	surge, billow
--	(cuckoo whistle)
a base and bowl	--
(hand-stand)	surprise
--	(whip crack)
oneself, the entrance	--
--	--
at work around him	--
, --	, white the foam
representations	--
--	(cuckoo whistle)
--	stairway
--	--
out of the necessary restraint	truth, certainty
--	--
(melancholy)	saffron
unconsciousness	--
--	(cowbell)
, (head-stand)	, --
--	mortally wounded
(back squat)	--
--	of the dark clouds
very seldom	--
--	(thundersheet)
--	--
extending in space	hollow of the knee
(jump)	--
, --	, (medium flowerpot)
--	--
--	set free
--	(duck whistle)
(pity)	--
fetches sighs	--
(hand-stand)	--
--	--
--	(chirp whistle)
adorned with flowers	--
, --	, hurricane
encounter	--
--	embroidered girdle
(jump)	(small flowerpot)
--	clear and loud
together	--
--	sleek plumed
turning all ways	--
(front somersault)	(pidgeon whistle)
in supplication	--
--	certainty

---



## Homeric Dialogue 2

The sense of waiting	-----	--
--		--
--		(rattle)
--		forsaken
let be		--
(pity)		--
beadstead, meal-time		snow-storm
(hand-spring)		(whip)
thicket of reeds		--
, --		, fawn
--		--
--		sleek plumed
(meditation)		--
--		(rub rim of glass 5/8 full)
desire		--
--		believe
--		(pidgeon whistle)
(hope)		--
bursting into tears		--
, --		, from the meadow
(hand-spring)		--
--		(duck whistle)
--		pause between whiles
kindly		--
--		--
(pleasure)		remembering
--		(large flowerpot)
service, to do anything		--
--		--
, --		, like-minded
local and temporal		--
(dive)		--
--		(cow bell)
--		ear-lobe
with a crushing blow		--
--		truth, certainty
--		(medium woodblock)
resting after motion		--
--		--
, (forward squat)		, clear and loud
finished		--
--		white with foam
--		--
hurling and thrusting		twig
(pleasure)		(rub rim of glass 5/8 full)
--		(small flowerpot)
the pavement		--
--		fine, delicate
going forth		--
, (abdominal roll)		, swollen



--  
(hand-spring)  
inbetween  
--  
--  
consistently  
(dive)  
--  
--  
, --  
by means of  
--  
--  
continuous net  
(dive)  
--  
within  
(despair)  
--  
, together  
(devotion)  
--  
--  
--  
bent in a spiral  
--  
--  
indeed  
--  
, (despair)  
of both men and animals  
--  
(back-squat)  
--  
thirsting  
--  
(shoulder-stand)  
--  
on the chance that  
, --  
hopeful  
--  
suddenly chosen  
(back-squat)  
inbetween  
--  
--  
known, thankful  
(head-stand)  
--

--  
mild, gentle  
--  
(rattle)  
lap up with the tongue  
--  
--  
(small flowerpot)  
--  
, rush after  
--  
(medium flowerpot)  
oblivion, forgetfulness  
--  
remiss  
--  
remain  
--  
(cuckoo whistle)  
--  
, --  
fig tree  
--  
moist, lazy  
(cuckoo whistle)  
--  
--  
red-cheeked  
--  
(cow bell)  
--  
, --  
--  
set free  
--  
(rattle)  
--  
(whip)  
--  
--  
--  
, (medium flowerpot)  
--  
fresh-sprouting  
--  
honey-sweet  
--  
exuberant  
(small flowerpot)  
--  
--  
surprise

---



# Homeric Dialogue 3

Personified	---
--	(whip)
--	---
(despair)	---
fringe	how much
(wonder)	---
--	---
--	(medium handbell)
perverse fire	twig
, --	, --
--	---
--	---
collecting violets	snow-storm
--	(small flowerpot)
supernatural	pouring wine
(jump)	---
a sunny spot	---
--	forsaken
--	(large handbell)
, (despair)	, believe
(devotion)	(cow bell)
--	blessings
pleasing to the heart	---
--	cause to swell
--	---
--	---
let fall, anything	---
(flip)	(small woodblock)
infatuated	---
, --	, irrevocable
--	(chirp whistle)
(devotion)	earthward
as is right	---
--	like-minded
--	---
hunting	---
--	(rattle)
(hand-spring)	friendship
cultivated day, monuments	---
, --	, --
from the thread	---
--	fresh-sprouting
(flip)	---
little, slight	---
--	(rub rim of glass 1/3 full)
--	victorious
--	---
--	---
(confusion)	(pidgeon whistle)
, the freshness of youth	, turn over the mind



--  
in the morning  
--  
--  
unmarried youth  
(fear)  
--  
--  
flowers, arm-chair  
, (abdominal roll)  
and also  
(shoulder-stand)  
--  
grown-up  
--  
(fear)  
rage of winds  
--  
--  
, --  
--  
from the thread  
--  
(wonder)  
--  
pleasing to the heart  
--  
(forward-squat)  
entrance  
, --  
(grief)  
--  
bed, sense  
--  
--  
(meditation)  
first offering  
--  
--  
, quick motion  
--  
--  
whether, or either  
(abdominal roll)  
are come to  
--  
--  
little, slight  
(wonder)

--  
--  
inmost  
(cuckoo whistle)  
--  
--  
reverence  
--  
--  
, nowhere  
--  
guiltless  
(rub rim of glass 5/8 full)  
--  
ambidextrous  
--  
nectar  
--  
(large flowerpot)  
, --  
--  
wild dove  
(cow bell)  
--  
--  
--  
(duck whistle)  
together  
--  
, --  
(large flowerpot)  
--  
--  
fawn  
(pidgeon whistle)  
present at  
--  
beyond  
(medium flowerpot)  
, basket  
--  
--  
--  
exuberantly  
(rattle)  
moist, lazy  
--  
(duck whistle)  
--  
revolve

---



# Homeric Dialogue 4

Human	--
--	(triangle)
(shadow boxing)	in supplication
--	--
(back-squat)	mighty
--	--
the pathos of the situation	--
--	(small woodblock)
carry home	obedience
, --	, --
--	make haste
--	--
deliberate	nowhere
--	(duck whistle)
--	--
tuneful, mortal	--
(anger)	(triangle)
always with	--
--	--
, (jealousy)	, fount
(pleasure)	--
--	(large handbell)
(shoulder-stand)	--
--	formally
--	--
bright from the	--
(hop)	entrance
--	(chirp whistle)
--	being present at
, right here	, --
--	not yet
--	--
carried off, certain	--
(despair)	--
--	(pidgeon whistle)
--	wild dove
white poplar	--
--	dancing
(abdominal roll)	--
, fitted together	, --
(jump)	(triangle)
merry-hearted	evasive
--	(cow bell)
--	--
--	(thundersheet)
burst off	mournful
(pity)	--
--	crossing over, beyond
--	--
, wounded in the heart	, --



--	(medium flowerpot)
--	--
the various implied meanings	sprinkle
--	--
--	ambidextrously
unsown	--
(hope)	--
gleaming	--
--	revolve
,--	, (chirp whistle)
(jump)	--
pushed back	--
--	(large handbell)
transitional	beyond
--	--
--	--
lead the way	are swept away
(menace)	(rub rim of glass 1/3 full)
--	turn over in the mind
,--	,--
--	(large handbell)
fervently smash	--
--	irrevocable
--	(thundersheet)
(jealousy)	close, thick
swooning	--
--	--
human	--
(devotion)	impulse
, unseen breath	,--
--	--
(despair)	--
--	(rub rim of glass 5/8 full)
bypath, and doubtful	--
--	a great many
--	(rattle)
stammer, thornbushes	all disclosing
--	--
(shadow boxing)	--
, the limit of motion	, how much
--	--
divinity	--
--	earthward
(pleasure)	(triangle)
fitted together	--
--	(cow bell)
(devotion)	very beautiful
--	--
tuneful, mortal	--
--	zeal

---



# Homeric Dialogue 5

Transfixed	---
--	(chirp whistle)
--	--
--	--
dew-drops	enduring
(jump)	--
dank, well-nourished	--
(love)	(rub rim of glass 5/8 full)
--	fount
, --	, --
carefully	--
(back-somersault)	(small handbell)
luxuriant	make haste
(pleasure)	--
remember	certainty
--	(medium handbell)
with pain	--
--	a great many
--	--
, --	, vulnerable
--	--
--	chalk line
sweet, pleasant	--
--	strong
--	(triangle)
--	--
--	(ratchet)
(back-squat)	--
charming	--
, (joy)	, close, compact
(hand-stand)	(medium woodblock)
--	left-handed
--	--
whether	zeal
--	(ratchet)
wide-growing	--
(jealousy)	--
--	fertile
strongly burning	--
, --	, --
prayed-for	--
--	sprinkle
(love)	--
miserably	--
--	--
--	the entrance
--	(pidgeon whistle)
dew-drops	--
--	(medium handbell)
, (back-somersault)	, into the river



lie down to sleep	--
--	--
--	fragrant
--	(ratchet)
darkness	--
(back-somersault)	--
--	the star mark
(hand-stand)	(triangle)
reverence	--
--	, drawing near
(joy)	(whip)
--	on behalf of
the resounding	--
--	--
(pleasure)	mighty
--	--
restraining passion	mournful
--	(thundersheet)
fall down	--
--	--
rescue	--
--	dirty, soiled
--	--
(melancholy)	--
--	--
--	(large flowerpot)
untroubled existence	--
--	far, far away
evening star	--
, (hop)	, (duck whistle)
discretion	--
--	(cuckoo whistle)
hold on to	--
(devotion)	transcendent
glory	--
--	sparkling
(back-somersault)	(ratchet)
beautiful meadows	together
--	--
--	, yearning for
--	--
well-rimmed	--
(jump)	--
--	impulses
--	(rattle)
carefully	escaped
--	--
--	(large handbell)
(grief)	--
--	with long and slender leaves

---



# Homeric Dialogue 6

Tender	-----	--
--		
(grief)		chalk line
unmeasured speech		--
(pleasure)		--
--		left-handed
--		(rattle)
treasure		--
--		--
, --		stairway
--		, (thundersheet)
--		healthful
--		(cow bell)
--		--
devine		hollow of the knee
(back-somersault)		--
of the mind		(ratchet)
--		enduring
(front-somersault)		--
, inexorable, unbroken		--
(grief)		, --
incessantly		for certain
(back-somersault)		--
--		vulnerable
--		--
listens to the		evening star
(hand-spring)		--
birds soaring		(medium handbell)
--		--
, --		together
--		, (duck whistle)
--		(chirp whistle)
(pity)		take to heart
unspoken		--
--		timid
--		--
implying time		(ratchet)
(joy)		shameless
, unintentionally		--
--		--
(hand-stand)		, --
at another time		--
--		--
--		the star mark
--		(cow bell)
ambrosia		agreement
(jealousy)		--
useful		--
--		with wide-stretching wings
, --		--
		, (rub rim of glass 1/3 full)



--	exhausted, drop by drop
--	--
humans	--
--	--
in sun and moon light	far, far away
--	(duck whistle)
(grief)	--
--	(triangle)
--	saffron
, always joined with	, --
--	(chirp whistle)
(love)	--
--	lie down to sleep
--	--
--	(large handbell)
--	--
divinity	tender, delicate
(head-stand)	--
bending in splendor	--
, --	, sparkling
--	duly becoming
dust in the air	--
--	(thundersheet)
a dog tooth from the wild field	--
(wonder)	cleansed
in the wind	--
--	--
(joy)	(pidgeon whistle)
, --	, --
blowing on the sea	--
(melancholy)	--
--	fragrant
--	(rub rim of glass 5/8 full)
--	--
--	with long and slender leaves
--	(duck whistle)
incessantly	sweet-smelling
(hand-stand)	--
, unspoken	, --
--	(rattle)
--	careful, excellent
the gift of tongues	--
(menace)	a bunch of grapes
at another place	--
--	--
(joy)	--
--	(whip)
if only sport	--
--	embroidered girdle



## Anti-Records and Conceptual Records

a survey by Ron Rice

Roughly 70 years ago, **Lazlo Moholy-Nagy** recognized the unprecedented efforts of the Italian **Bruitists** to broaden our perception of sound. He expanded on their noise-based developments by "reinventing" the record. In an article in **Der Sturm** #7 (1923), he outlined the fundamentals of his work: "I have suggested to change the gramophone from a reproductive instrument to a productive one, so that on a record without prior acoustic information, the acoustic information, the acoustic phenomena itself originates by engraving the necessary **"Ritzchriftreihen"** (etched grooves)." He presented detailed suggestions for manipulating discs, creating "real sound forms" to train people to be "true music receivers and creators". The importance of his work is two-fold: first for his creative contribution to the aesthetics of sound, and second for the questions he raised regarding the relationships between artist, performance, recording medium and listener. Moholy-Nagy bypassed traditional modes of music reproduction by giving concerts at the **Bauhaus** school featuring his manipulated discs. In many ways he set the stage for the vast, diverse, continuing lines of development presented in this survey.

The following sketchy chronology includes a variety of works, some of which offer audible sound and all of which transcend the element of sound to function at some other level. A few peripheral tidbits of information are also included. Following the chronology, the works of **AMK** and the **Haters** are discussed in more detail. Their records point to a possible future of anti- and conceptual experimentation while acknowledging some long-standing concerns. It is important to note that both **AMK** and the **Haters** resist the term "anti" in reference to their works, which are actually all playable in some sense. Last, an annotated bibliography of "anti-records" released through **RRRecords** is included. **Ron Lessard** of **RRR** is largely responsible for the current wave of "anti-" experimentation, and most of the important works of the last few years were released through his catalog.

So what does all this have to do with minimalism? You tell me. This article was designed to serve as a minor collision with many of the other ideas presented in this issue of **H23**. The perceptive reader will surely find many similar concerns as well as conflicting ones. The point is not so much to categorize or theorize as to simply offer various points of departure...

- 1903** **Thomas Edison** got the ball rolling by developing recordings on cylinders. This same year, the chocolate manufacturer **Stollwerk** developed a children's player that played music from grooves etched into chocolate.
- 1918** The electric record player begins to develop.
- 1920** The first flexi-disc is marketed.
- 1922** **Darius Milhaud** begins experimenting with voice transformations through record speed variation.
- 1923** Was **Lazlo Moholy-Nagy** the father of the Anti-Record?
- 1930** **Paul Hindemith** and **Ernst Toch** recycle records for



sound montages.

1931 Experiments by **Leopold Stokowski** reduced the record revolution speed from 78rpm to 33 1/3rpm.

1934 **Theodor Adorno** publishes his essay, "The Form of the Record" in the magazine 23. In the film *L'Atalante* by **Jean Vigo**, an actor plays a record with his fingernail. **Karl Valentin** and **Lesli Karlstadt** produce the film *Im Schallplattenden*.

1936 **Edgard Varese** experiments with records, playing them backwards, using various speeds, etc..

1939 **John Cage** "Imaginary Landscape #1", a concert for two record players with variable speed, test records, piano and cymbal.

1948 Vinyl replaces shellac as the dominant material with which records are made.

1952 **John Cage** "Imaginary Landscape #5", a concert for 42 records.

1958 Early experiments by **Arthur Kopke** (see 1972).

1963 **Milan Knizak**: "In 1963-64 I used to play records both too slowly and too fast and thus changed the quality of the music, thereby, creating new compositions. In 1965 I started to destroy records: scratch them, punch holes in them, break them. By playing them over and over again (which destroyed the needle and often the record player too) an entirely new music was created--unexpected, nerve-racking and aggressive. Compositions lasting one second or almost infinitely long (as when the needle got stuck in a deep groove and played the same phrase over and over). I developed this system further. I began sticking tape on top of records, painting over them, burning them, cutting them up and glueing parts of different records back together, etc. to achieve the widest possible variety of sounds. A glued joint created a rhythmic element separating contrasting melodic phrases... Since music that results from playing ruined gramophone records cannot be transcribed to notes or to another language (or if so, only with great difficulty), the records themselves may be considered as notations at the same time." (this quote reprinted from **Broken Music**--see bibliography)

1964 **Robert Watts** (phono records): "...I made a series of spray-painted records for a **Fluxus** performance at the **FluxStone** on Canal Street. These were played by the audience, and as the paint wore off the music gradually was revealed." (this quote reprinted from **Extended Play**--see bibliography)

1966 **Ken Friedman** "Zen for Record". A reference to **Nam June Paik's** "Zen for Film", this record contains no sound and offers no suggestion for the production of sound. It is silence. Various versions were made available, with blank records and jackets and with painted ones.

1968 **Timm Ulrichs** "Schleifpapier-Schallplatten". Thirteen discs were made from commercial sandpaper of various degrees of coarseness. With blank center labels in place, these were billed as "mono-sandpaper records".

1969 **John Cage** "33 1/3", a concert for 12 record players.

1970 **Thomas Schmit** "Schallplatte". Schmit's record is a thin strip of wood, about three feet long, labelled, signed and dated. Approximately ten were made. A contribution to sound aesthetics? **Robert Watts** continues his phono record



creations: "I began experiments with the manufacture of a series of records in different materials such as metals, plastic, wood, clay and latex. Most of these were made on a machine lathe at Rutgers University, and I thought of them as being sound portraits of this machine. The various bands on these records were varied in depth of cut, spacing and rpm. I was interested in the various sounds produced in this manner from the varied materials." (from **Extended Play**)

**1972 Arthur Kopcke "Music While You Work, Piece #1".** On an otherwise traditional disc, spots of glue and scotch tape redirect the stylus, creating fragmentary music and noise. An edition of 150 copies was produced on **Edition Block**, Berlin.

**1973 Braco Dimitrijevic "Njeqove dovke glas (His Pencil's Voice)".** Yugoslavian Dimitrijevic distributed his record through a gallery in Zagreb--a piece of white cardboard, with one side "etched" by a pencil, playable at 16, 33, 45, or 78rpm.

**1977 Boyd Rice** began experiments leading to the manufacture of records with looped grooves and multiple center holes for off-axis playing (**NON "Knife Ladder"/"Mode of Infection"** single and the **"Pagan Muzak"** album). These records were playable at any speed and maximum volume was suggested. Rice stated, "In the first record I even wanted loop grooves--I wanted overlapping loop grooves. Theoretically, there would be about three of them, and they'd overlap at certain points, and they might do random things--the needle might go in a pattern for a while, then change. But over the phone, long distance, I couldn't even get the pressing plant to do a loop groove. On the second record ("Knife Ladder"), I persevered and finally got it." (reprinted from the **Industrial Culture Handbook**--see bibliography)

**1982 Piotr Nathan "Absicht einer Revolution".** Using a record of speeches by **Lenin**, Nathan devised a phonographic apparatus and glued thin cables to the record surface to deform the source sound. Originally a gallery installation, the new sound was recorded and pressed as a flexi-disc for broader availability. **Martin Turner "Ekliptischer Rhythmus".** This plexiglass record has one groove on which certain markings were made. Says Turner, "The Constellation of the Stars on the date of birth is applied... by means of scratching or hatching, marked as an acoustic event. When played on a record player, a certain rhythm results, which--in itself cyclic recurrent--varies with each person..." (from **Broken Music**)

**1983 R.I.P. Hayman "(Disc Design)".** Never actually realized, Hayman designed an endless random play record that would require complex computer interfaced equipment to develop the master. Once pressed, however, the disc would be playable on any turntable. **Die Todliche Doris "Chore & Soli".** In an attempt to liberate her work from the typical pattern of critical comparison to past work, she released a boxset of eight mini records playable only with an enclosed, battery operated playing device (normally a component of talking dolls, etc.). Each album side contained perhaps thirty seconds of sound, about the same amount of time it took



to insert the disc in the apparatus. A thousand copies exist.  
**1984 VA Wolfli "Pferd.Horse.Elastic".** An abrasive wheel for a power grinder, stamped and distributed in a record cover in an edition of 100 (Dry grinding, maximum 5100rpm). **Winfried Wolf** created an untitled series of records treated with sandpaper, paint and other materials. Playable with risk.

**1987 Peter Lardong** creates little chocolate records, playable by eating them.

**1988 Peter Fischli and David Weiss "Schallplatte"** This self-made, self-molded record is made of Beracryl, a kind of rubber. Playable on a turntable (with some risk), the sound is of extremely muddled, low-fi disco music. It was released in an edition of 120 as a special issue of **Parkett** magazine (#17). **Christian Marclay "Footsteps"**. This one-sided disc, containing the sound of footsteps, carpeted the floor of a gallery during Marclay's exhibit of the same name. A thousand copies were then boxed and distributed, complete with dirt and scratches from gallery foot traffic.

**1989 to present**

**The Dust Breeders "Home Tape It! (The Killer Inside Mix), A Sandpaper Mantra"**. This attractive 7" slab of sandpaper, in a numbered edition of 28, included a short statement discussing pranks, record market strategy, and **John Cage's "Silence"**. **Crash Worship ADRV "Flow"**. The original LP was a compilation of local bands, including Crash Worship, who took part in a recording class of some sort. "Flow" materialized when Crash Worship beautifully silkscreened and etched the vinyl, permanently altering all tracks but their own. Though disfigured with ink and scratches, the tracks can be played. And visually, the revised record is stunning.

Let's touch on a couple recent "anti-tape" projects, shall we? **Bruxist "Temorage"**. A nicely packaged cassette, with nails and stickers inconveniently glued to the shell. Those who took the time to dismantle the piece and play the tape found that it actually contained sound--a brief spoken passage, looped for the duration of the tape. **TAC "Anti-Tape Series"**. TAC, a.k.a. **Tom Cox**, recently produced a series of four tapes: **short time tape** "drastically alters the function of time", **one time tape** "functionally self destructs on first listen", **no time tape** offers "no function unless constructed", and **anti tape**, which is a "totally disfunctional" piece of sculpture. Tom has stated that his tapes were produced "in an attempt to reorient the audio aspects of experimental tape packages."

**AMK**

AMK's contribution to the world of conceptual records is based on the **"Montage"**, a series of cut-up and recombined flexi-discs. "Personally, I never thought of them as anti-anything," AMK told **H23** in a letter accompanying his record. "It's a record, it's meant to be played on a turntable, and it does produce a sound. Play it and find out. My reason for starting to make these was sort of a joke I played



on G.X. (Jupitter-Larsen) when he sent me his silent record with the "scratch to hear" instructions. Well instead I started glueing pieces of flexi-discs to it. After that I started making them just using the flexis. I sent one to Ron (Lessard) and he asked me for a hudred to release as an "anti-flexi". So that's the tale. If anything, these should be thought of as "pro-records". I just cut them up to fraction concepts into more dynamic wholes. With the advent of CD's, the idea of a record is archaic, so the "montage" has taken the idea to its most illogical conclusion--a flexi, a lower grade of an already outmoded record, cut-up and recombined. To make it worse, each one is different, each one is hand-assembled, and every turntable will play them differently. Great fun. So that's sort of it. When I started out, I didn't have any intellectual predispositions about what I was doing. That's never for me to decide. It was really just in good fun."

In addition to the original **"Montage"** flexi released in 1989 on RRR, a number of documentations of "Montage" performances have been released as conventional recordings. Those who see anti- and conceptual records as an attempt to subvert the traditional modes of music production might view this act as a "sell-out", but it should be obvious that subversion was never AMK's intention. **AMK/AMK<sup>2</sup> "Montage/ Collaboration"**, recorded for Banned Productions, was a live performance from 1989, including collaborations with members of White Hand and Warlock Pinchers. **AMK/DAS "Floppy Night"**, also on Banned, was a mix-down of a live radio performance with DAS of Big City Orchestra. This seven-turntable show was released in nice hand-painted packaging. Other recorded performances include "Scan" on Sounds for Consciousness Rape, "Flex" on My Tongue Records, and "RRR-AMK-Montage", performed by Ron Lessard and Due Process.

## The Haters

Under the name The Haters, G.X. Jupitter-Larsen has created a wide range of experimental art--conceptual, sound-based and performance-based. He had this to say about his conceptual work: "In the context of the "anti-record", the word "anti" implies that the record is unplayable. As if to suggest that the menu is the meal. All of my records are playable, maybe not always by ordinary means, but playable nevertheless. This is why the releases of mine which are played without a stereo are referred to as "conceptual" records. In not wanting to limit my vocabulary, I started releasing records which had nothing to do with music. Accounts of noise outside of a musical context--noise as motif. Not all trees are oak trees. Not all people are men. So not all forms of audio arrangements should be forms of music. As for my newest releases, just because you're not hearing anything doesn't mean you're not listening to something."

G.X.'s conceptual works date back to 1983, when he released **The Haters** silent EP, a blank record that came with instructions informing the holder that he must first complete the record by scratching it before he can listen to it on his stereo. Then 1988 saw the release of **"Wind**



**Licked Dirt**", a blank LP and a sample of dirt packaged in a transparent bag. The instructions stated that the record was played simply by rubbing dirt on it, bypassing the need for a stereo. That same year, **"Tractor"** was released, a record in the traditional sense, except that the grooves on one side of the LP started at the center, running out to the edge. G.X. broke new ground in 1990 with the creation of **"Oxygen is Flammable"**, a broken piece of plastic packaged in a small box. The enclosed instructions stated that the broken plastic is a record, and that it's played by pouring water over it. The instructions also called attention to the similarities between the sounds of water falling and fire rising. He has also recently produced **"Shear"**, a ball of cotton batting packaged in a small box. Rapped around the contents are instructions on three thin strips of paper, which inform the holder that the cotton batting is a recording. This record is played by being squeezed, the sound being a "sharp fluffy slighness" and a "thin fluffy pressed". **"Shear"** and **"Oxygen is Flammable"** carry the record to new conceptual plateaus by eliminating the materials traditional to record manufacture, blurring the distinction between performer and listener (as the listener must take an active role in the production of sound, more so than placing a needle on a piece of vinyl), and in a sense by questioning the nature of improvisation. One could argue that a traditional recording of improvisational music undermines the concept of improvisation the moment a particular version of the music is recorded (one of perhaps an infinite number of versions). By recording the piece, it becomes fixed, unchangeable, in a sense static. G.X.'s recent works, by turning the listener into a performer, create a truly improvisational recording which will vary slightly every time it is played. This opens up a whole new can of worms that's much too vast to explore in this article.

## RRRecords

Ron Lessard recalls the circumstances leading to the first "anti-record" released on his label: **"Andrew Smith"** was an art student in Boston. One day he walked into the store with hand-destroyed, hand-altered records he did as a school project. His teachers and fellow students weren't too impressed; they didn't see the point. But I was overwhelmed by their visual appeal and the potent "musical" possibilities. I told Andy to make me 100 copies for release on RRR."

Using the pseudonym **Billboard Combat**, Andy called his project **"Metastasis"**--a series of LP's embedded with razor blades, nails, pins, needles, glass, etc.. Lessard's own "group", **Due Process**, soon produced **"Do Nothing"**, a blank LP with no grooves, no sound, and **"Do Damage"**, a record with hand-cut grooves, made with a homemade lathe. Both Due Process projects were produced in an edition of 100 copies. **The Haters** approached RRR with their **"Wind Licked Dirt"**, a record played by rubbing dirt on it. RRR distributed 200 copies. Lessard created an anti-version of one of his "traditional" recordings by altering 100 copies of the **"Colorado"** compilation. Titled **"Colorado Anti-Record Edition"**, Ron



took a nail and scratched into the grooves of the **Architects Office** track the words "Fuck Architects Office", thus severely altering the sound of their song. **Kapotte Muziek** sent RRR 200 copies of an anti-project they called "**Heathen Muzak**", a 7" tribute to **Boyd Rice** with hand-cut grooves and extra holes drilled off axis. Then "**Manipulation Muzak**", by **Honeymoon Production**, was released in an edition of 100 copies. It was a palm-sized chunk of raw vinyl with instructions on how to melt it, flatten it, and cut your own grooves with an enclosed nail. The famous "**Montage**" anti-flexi by **AMK** was then released in an edition of 100 copies. His cut-up and recombined flexi-discs were perhaps the most successful in the RRR anti-series, widely performed and recorded for several record labels. The last anti-release on RRR was "**Living on the Regression Line**", by **The Linear Regressionists**, probably the first anti-compact disc! Only 50 copies were made of this silent CD with holes drilled into it. The "liner notes" offered only a vague explanation of their intentions.

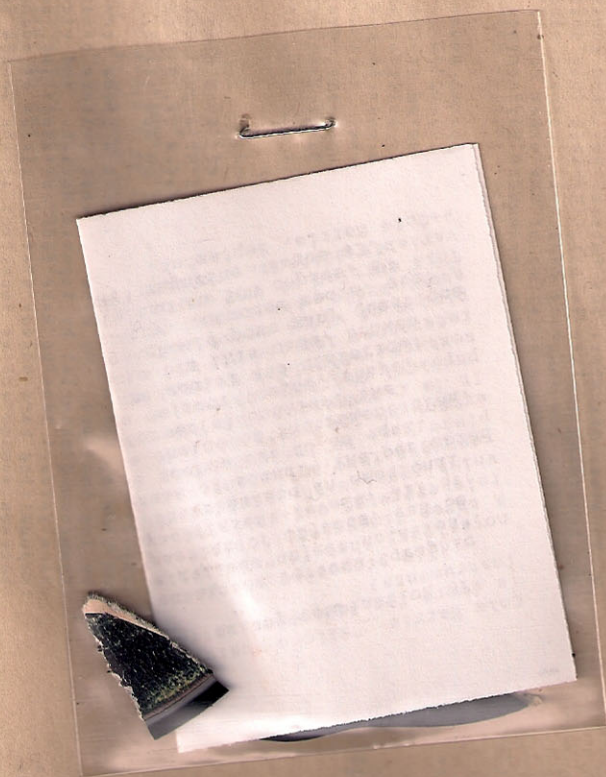
All anti-records on RRR were extremely limited editions, and most if not all are sold out. Lessard has also released a few cassettes documenting the performance of various anti-records on his label. When asked if he would continue his anti-series, Ron told us that he would consider releasing other anti-records. He said he has a couple possible releases planned, but nothing was finalized. We'll have to stay tuned.

**End.**

**Bibliography.** Ooops! A reading list wasn't compiled in time for this printing. If you want this information, send a SASE or an IRC to Anti-bibliography, c/o H23, PO Box 2306, Athens, OH 45701-2306, USA.



1000 copies of this issue of H23 were printed. The first 500 copies include two art objects, stapled to this page. If this page is empty, the first 500 copies are sold out.





## Reviews

An important note regarding H23's review section:

At some point I suffered a sort of crisis with regard to the publication of critical reviews, both in terms of the physical limitations of covering the vast amount of material I receive, and the conceptual dilemmas surrounding critical writing in general. Time and space are of course limited. To adequately cover the 400+ items received since the last issue would mean excessive labor and an issue devoted entirely to reviews. And frankly, review writing becomes quite boring after so many.

More than anything, experimental art is the communication of emotion and experience and is of course subjective. The critic/listener/viewer's experience of the work is also subjective. It has become clear to me that most reviews have little to do with these facts and often mislead readers. "Educated opinions" have more to do with the writer's ability to write and the scope of her record collection than with an understanding of the work in question.

The function of the writer might more appropriately be to simply describe, as accurately and objectively as possible, the work in question. But the willingness to resist personal input is rare and not necessarily unwanted. So many walls stand between the writer and the proper review that I'm beginning to believe the task is impossible. How does one "identify" a work, especially an experimental and perhaps unprecedented one? How does one identify elements of uniqueness that require a visceral reaction, while not allowing herself to be prejudiced by such reactions? Will the work communicate similarly to others? Does the writer possess the perceptual awareness to notice the qualities that others desire? On top of all this, we can't simply ignore historical context, artistic intentions, etc.. There are factors outside of the work in question that people care about.

It is important to confront these issues, and it is important to publish as much information as possible about currently available recordings, to act as liaison between the artist and listener. You'll notice that some of the reviews are longer than most. At some point I decided the best plan was to give brief mention to as many items as possible. Still, many will be disappointed to find that their recordings are not covered--this section represents about 25% of the items received. You'll also find this section is loaded with typing errors; I opted to get this already delayed issue to press without a lot of proofreading.

I appreciate any input, positive or negative, about my approach to reviews and critical writing in general. If you have ideas, please write.  
-Ron Rice.

16-17 "When All Else Fails" (LP, Vision, PO Box 568, CH-4005 Basel, Switzerland)

Not too long ago I spent a great deal of time listening to free and avant garde jazz, and I'm drawn drawn to this record's jazz underpinnings. It's an exceptional example of progressive, free, powerful improvisation. Instrumentation includes sax, prepared sax, drums, guitar, guitar-controlled electronics, and various electronics and percussion. Each piece quickly settles into some wild groove and totally screams within it. Recommended. -RR

Agog "Woehstable Arnodocile" (Cassette, Spagyric, 19241 Kenya St., Northridge, CA 91326)

Percussive--a huge variety of tones and timbres. Strings and droning sounds, also primarily percussively used. Music?--a laying down of distant fragmented harmonics. Distant musical voices barely bleed through the other noises. Acoustic. Is that a voice I hear, or a sick puppy? The environment is primarily acoustic, primarily sparse and somewhat "academic" (Stockhausen comes to mind, sort of). Electronic sounds occasionally interrupt to give the space a certain urgency. Bits of non-western meditative space also. An extremely creative piece. Recommended. -RR

Arcane Device/PGR "Fetiish" (CD, Silent Records, 540 Alabama, Suite 315, San Francisco, CA 94110)

One long track by Arcane Device and four interrelated shorter cuts by PGR. Both groups have produced several recordings of somewhat minimal, predominantly atonal music. This recording shows them exploring some new territory, albeit minimal and ambience-oriented. Includes an essay by Alan Sondheim. -RR

Architects Office "9th Year Gala Performance" (Cassette, Realization, 540 S San Clemente, Ventura CA 93001)  
This is a must for AO fans--a March, '91 performance in Boulder, Colorado including previously unreleased material and new versions of old tunes. Five long tracks in all. The cuts are strange, eclectic electronic improves with a minimal use of voice and acoustic instrumentation. Performers were Joel Haertling, W. Douglas, Stickler, Tom Peters, jr., and guest Eric Tilleson. The recording quality is slightly less than desirable, and there are a few annoying drop-outs (perhaps mine is just a bad tape and not representative of the other copies). Recording quality aside, this is a worthwhile performance document. -RR

"Arrhythmia" Various Artists (CD, Charnel House Productions, PO Box 170277, San Francisco, CA 94117-0277)

A variety of percussive, rhythm-oriented tracks ranging from pensive and delicate to danceable to full-force noise. The disc transcends genre to present diverse cuts linked only by a devotion to the exploration of rhythm. Includes pieces by Formula 409, Muslingauze, Dissecting Table, Crash Worship ADRV, Momento Mori, Pain Teens, Trance, Bass, Master/Slave Relationship, Chop Shop, Acandrum, Psy 231, Plateau, Iao Core, and Turbo Messiah. -RR

"Assemblage" Various Artists (2" EP, Korm Plastics, c/o Frans de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6536 XK Nijmegen, Holland; and Selektion, c/o Achim Wollscheid, Gutzkowstrasse 29, 6 Frankfurt am Main 70, Germany; and Petri Supplies, PO Box 45702, Seattle, WA 98105, USA)

On side A, S.B.O.T.H.I. constructs a piece from sound material by Ios Smolders. On side B, Yeast Culture constructs a piece from sound material by Kapotte Muziek. And vice versa. And vice versa. Thus we have four collaborative, noise-based works emphasizing hard-edged, distinct pieces of sound. Silences between sounds are as important as the sounds themselves. Repetitive elements intermingle with singular ones. "All sounds contained within this project are free for use in any other project." An edition of 200 with individualized cover art, and a short essay by Ios Smolders. -RR



"Assemblage" Various Artists (Cassette, PBK, 115 W. 33rd, San Bernardino, CA 92405-2505)  
If Luigi Russolo could be here to witness the legacy of the "Art of Noise", I believe he would be very pleased. The noise-based works on this recording are so beautiful I can hardly contain myself we6t97k-3l-sp9WRN+OF\* GKYFQ&R!. See what I mean! Some of the works invite dreamlike voyages, such as those by Sound Theater and Vidna Obmana. Others toss you around in storms of sound, like the PBK and Hands To Tracks. Also presented are Joseph Nechvatal, Asmus Tietchens, Art Simon, Jim O'Rourke, and Illusion of Safety. Some passages are minimal in nature, while others read like wild free-jazz improvs. I listen to this tape often; consider that a recommendation. -RR

"Audio By Visual Artists" (Tellus #21) Various Artists (Cassette, Tellus, 596 Broadway, 602, New York, NY 10012)  
The material here represents about 70 years of audio experimentation beginning with the Futurist movement. The approaches are varied, and the artists come from various places in the historical spectrum (Dada, Letterism, Art Brut, Fluxus, Conceptual Art, etc.). The tape is worth your money, if only for the chance to hear rare recordings of Filippo Marinetti, Antonio Russolo, Marcel Duchamp, Jean Dubuffet, and others. Current works are also included by artists such as Susan Hiller, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Terry Fox, Christian Boltanski, etc. Recommended. -RR

Banafish (Magazine, Tedium House, PO Box 424762, San Francisco CA 94142-4762)  
One of the best music magazines in America just got...different. Same sort of experimental and noise-based coverage, but as of the last issue they're looking and acting more like a normal magazine and less like a hard-to-follow pile of mixed-up grungy sex droppings. Not that I was complaining. The latest issue finally includes a real contents page! It covers Hanatarash, Boredoms, Lee Ranaldo, Merchants of the New Bizarre, etc.. The enclosed 7" EP (on brown vinyl) presents Eye Yamatsuka, Merchants..., Ranaldo, Easy Goings, Dead C, Gate, and Mr. Freeman's Pink Underwear. The issue just before this one, last of the "old-style" issues, included Smegma, Boyz Rice (yike!), Earl X (wow!), Lisa Suckdog, Institute of Absurdity, Bringdownz, Borbetomagus, etc.. The enclosed EP included a NON track that made me more than a little uncomfortable. -RR

Bee Queen "Mappa Mundi" (cassette, Korm Plastics, c/o Frans de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, Holland)  
Frans is very active and involved in several projects. This is the first I've heard of Bee Queen. I don't know who else is involved, except that it was recorded at the Loft, mixed to DAT at Dot, and gives thanks to the Legendary Pink Dots. It's a limited edition of 100. I hope copies are still available, because I highly recommend it. A few long noise-based ambient tracks. Seamless flows of precise textures and repetitive "industrial" sounds. Only a few people are creating this sort of post-industrial minimal music with such compositional prowess. If you enjoy the work of PBK, for instance, you're sure to enjoy this. And the recording quality is great as well. Includes an attractive 16-page booklet. -RR

Belt (7", PO Box 492, New Paris, IN 46553)  
Noise guitarist Joel Bender teams up with a bassist and a drum machine for three loud tunes that owe something to rock 'n roll. Grungy, pulsating streams of sexy noise in the spirit of the great Japanese noise-rock bands, but slower. -RR

Belt "S/He" (Cassette, PO Box 492, New Paris, IN 46553)  
This solo guitar work is somewhat of a departure from Bender's rhythm-based 7". The two side-long works are still very grungy and somehow erotic, but in a less obvious way. He creates wonderful textural environments with an amazing intensity. He says this is representative of Belt's new direction, and I look forward to further development. -RR

John Bennett/ Rotcod Zzaj "Binary Reductions" (Cassette, Dick Metcalfe, HQ 19th Subcom, PO Box 2879, AP0, San Francisco, CA 96218)(also available from Luna Bisonte, 137 Leland Ave., Columbus, OH 43214)

Poetry by Bennett; keyboards, percussion and mix by Zzaj. Simple improvised backgrounds for a variety of textual meandering. Effects are often used on Bennett's voice to add to the impact of the reading. In some cases, several Bennett's are reading several things at once. -RR

Blowhole "Momentist Jig" (Cassette, Turbine Cassettes, PO Box 4585, Santa Clara, CA 95056-4585)  
This is Jeph Jerman's latest project--you may remember him as Hands To and as City of Worms. Here, Patrick Barber, Dr. Soule, Fil Rodriguez and Scott Hiller join him for a devastating avant-jazz-noise extravaganza. Edited from performances in late 1990 at the Underground and the Hot House. Instrumentation includes bass, trumpet, saxes, drums, percussion, tapes and various devices. Not just another noise tape, this performance acknowledges the legacy of John Coltrane. Turbine has also rereleased several classic recordings from Jerman's now defunct Big Body Parts label. -RR

Anthony Braxton "19 (Solo) Compositions, 1988" (CD, New Albion Records, 584 Castro, #515, San Francisco, CA 94114)  
Recorded in concerts in Cambridge and San Francisco in April, 1988. All but two of these short sax works are Braxton's, ranging from cool jazz fragments to squeaky free forms. The pieces are titled three times: sterile composition numbers, simple abstract sketches, and word titles like "pointillistic" and "buzz logic". Close examination reveals that the works are interrelated in complex ways. With a programmable CD player, you can order the pieces by similarity of title parts, sketches for instance, and certain textural and compositional relationships will come to the foreground. Thus repeated listenings through various song orders can give a better understanding of Braxton's musical concerns at the time of this recording. Braxton is in my opinion a musical genius, and my ability to fully understand his work is limited (his writing included--try comprehending his massive Tri-axium Writings for instance!). But at the gut level, the variety of emotions he can evoke is inspiring. Included on this recording is a short version of Monk's "Round Midnight", respectful to the original, yet bubbling under the surface with Braxton's peculiar energy. This recording is highly recommended. -Ron Rice.



Michael Chacholak "Subterranean Rage" (Cassette, M+M Music, PO Box 38, Cove, OR 97824)  
This tape is now fairly old, but it is still very worthy of your attention. Abstract, electronic and concrete soundscapes of a somewhat surreal nature. I believe this tape paralleled the release of a novel by the same name, which surely influenced the choice of moods and timbres. Most of the pieces emphasize darker tones and utilize a variety of sound sources. A feeling of seriousness permeates the entire tape. Much of this would make for heavy soundtrack music for the right film. -RR

City of Worms "Whime" (Cassette, Realization, 540 S San Clemente, Venturam, CA 93001)  
Another rerelease from the Big Body Parts catalog, this '88 recording includes a side-long piece recorded for KZSC, Santa Cruz, CA. The dominant "style" is a dense mass of slow-moving, multi-timbral noise with a variety of found sound and percussion bubbling under the surface. Some tracks deemphasize the noise in favor of primitive, pounding rhythms. The most effective "tool" here is the inclusion of human voices recorded very low in the mix, so you can't quite understand what's being said. It increases your attention to the music, and helps create a disquieting atmosphere. -RR

Condemek/Joe Colon "Aural Neurosis/Schismajam" (7", ERL Records, 418 Madison Ave., Albany, NY 12210) The Condemek tune is a dense, noisy, provocative collage--respectful, intricate "industrial" music that's rarely heard anymore. Their ensemble utilizes guitars, violin, tapes and cybersonics(?). Highlights include extensive guitar manipulation and voices appropriated from radio and/or television. The Joe Colon track is a different animal entirely--two guitars, bass, drums and "treatments" in an informal, low-fi rock 'n' noise jam. Listening to "Schismajam" took me back to the days when I would get together with friends in "real" bands and participate in living room jams where half the players were into Black Flag, the other Boyd Rice. The results were generally unsuccessful for either side. This Joe Colon track is priceless to me for personal reasons, but it's a sound not many "outsiders" could love. -Ron Rice.

Copernicus "Null" (CD, Nevermore, PO Box 170150, Brooklyn, NY 11217) Copernicus' heavy-handed yet intriguing brand of poetry meanders through the depths of depression and concern to pinnacles of anger and places where "robots march to the yellow past and are un hypnotized by one real glimpse of the sky." As a bonus, Copernicus screams and cries at no extra charge. Did I say heavy-handed? Perhaps pretentious is a better word. His words are written specifically for some tracks, while others are improvised live on this album, his first since "Deeper" back in '87. A variety of improvisational ensembles back his readings, and there's also a composed piece for synth and solo female voice. The six ensemble tracks vary considerably, though they all possess a hint of the spirituality of jazz excursions by Coltrane, Mahavishnu, Santana, etc.. I don't mean to suggest that Copernicus has reached the heights of Trane's genius, and the sound is actually quite different. I'm simply proposing that they travel in similar "free" and "spiritual" circles.  
Most of the ensembles on this album utilize six or seven players on guitar, bass, trombone, synth, drums, vocals, piano, organ and flute, or some partial combination of these.

One beautiful piece for 19 musicians adds marimba, acoustic guitar, trumpets, and all sorts of percussion. My favorite track titled "Touch" is also the longest (about 16 minutes) and the most pensive and delicate work on the album. It's a beautiful mix of two studio sessions recorded three years apart! The piece successfully blends passages of poetry, classical piano, droning synth, parts where Copernicus can be heard backing himself, and fragments of intricate free jazz. In all, the album will offer considerable food for thought, both textually and instrumentally. But beware, Copernicus is not a happy man. If you're looking for something cheerful, look elsewhere. -Ron Rice.

Crash Worship ADRV "What So Ever Thy Hand Findeth, Do It With All Thine Might" (12" EP, !Alarma!, PO Box 404, Encinitas, CA 92024)  
"Olla Ron! Here's a copy of the EP which is doing well in its 2nd 1000. The tour was good, eventful, esp. Denver (shut down by police, but got to play 1/2 our set and do Discipline with Illusion of Safety. And Toronto (Rob is a tremendous person). D.C. was funny, 800+ people with Fugazi--young, terrified crowd. In any case, we're doing 3 days of recording--video soundtrack--then I'm off to Europe for 2 months. Will probably do some interviews...radio work...We're regrouping next year...one of us will send a new catalogue soon. All the best, Markees." This is a must have. Beautiful tribal music. Further description is difficult for me. Just buy it. -RR

Cyanosis (Magazine, 318 Mendocino Ave., Ste. 30, Santa Rosa, CA 95404)  
The premier issue is a glossy, 110-page literary journal. A nice variety of writing, poetry, photography and other artwork, interviews and reviews. We'll probably have to sift through a few forthcoming issues before Cyanosis settles into a social or political or aesthetic groove. For now, we can enjoy its open-endedness. My favorite items were the charcoal and mixed media drawings by A. Waggoner, a short essay by Derek Fell titled "A Beginner's Guide to Art Deconstruction", and the Mikhail Epstein interview. -RR

Dabecy "Destroying the Bestial and Contaminated Enemy" (cassette, 937 W. Cardinal Dr., Sunnyvale, CA 94087) A variety of strong compositions emphasizing harsh noise. Well placed melodic and percussive instrumentation sets this tape atop your typical homegrown noise. A few tunes are rhythmically open-ended, while others find stability in pulsating loops of generator noise, distorted voice, etc.. The sound is generally engaging, recalling the music of Boyd Rice and older SPK. The thematic guise of the tape seems to be a rather vague, mutated look at christianity (example: "angels pointing in the direction of the anti-christ"). The use of christian symbology can be pretentious and is certainly overused, but that doesn't deny the fact that "Destroying the Bestial..." is an exciting slab of sound. -Ron Rice.

De Fabriek "Made in Germany" (CD, Artware Productions, Tannusstr. 63b, 6200 Wiesbaden, Germany, and De Fabriek Records, PO Box 1135, 8001 BC Zwolle, Holland)  
This is a continuous collage/assemblage of a variety of work--music, conversation, noise, concrete, etc.. Contains a brief history of the group and a short series of black and white photos. A limited edition of 500. -RR



"Death of Vinyl" Various Artists (CD, DOVentertainment, 2 Bloor St., West, Suite 100-159, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2 Canada)  
Subtitled "an international compilation of new media artists", this recording includes diverse material from heavily sampled rhythm-oriented tracks to more abstract soundscapes. Included are Nubile G. and the Spurious Whiz, Alfred 23 Harth, Vasilisk, Zoviet France, Tape Beatles, Zone, Luciano Dari and many more.  
-RR

Deltavee "...got no place to go" (Cassette, Vinyl Records, PO Box 1232, Madison, TN 37116)  
This tape is very traditional at the structural level--a bluesy sort of progressive rock with a few more folk-based tunes. Some of the songs offer a degree of contextual experimentation in the form of twisted, goofy lyrics. -RR

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DimThingShine "The Funky Mystery Rhythm Project" (cassette, Thingsflux Music, 7829 Miramar Pkwy., Miramar, FL 33023)  
D.T.S. has sent me only parts of this one before. It's a much earlier release, circa 1989, with parts that go all the way back to '81. Having listened to many different things/styles by D.T.S., I'm already used to his wizardry... thematic threads loosely tied to Funk and certainly to mystery. Contains vocal loops on top of real instruments (guitar, drums, keys, even Chapman stick) that have energy and direction. The thing that always strikes me about his tapes/records is the quality of sound and musicianship. While there are some sections that contain the dreaded PATTERNS, they are only long enough to lull you into thinking that everything is okay. Then they rip you from yer reverie and bring you back to the reality of life. Some of the piano sections (beautiful interludes, by the way) even have strong jazz influence and show both skill and dexterity. This release has numerous folks, too many to mention except to say that poet extraordinaire John M. Bennett makes an appearance. As with most other D.T.S. projects, this avoids classification, which says a lot in its favor, at least for this reviewer!  
-Rotcod Zzaj.

"Face Value II" DimThingShine (cassette, , Thingsflux Music, 7829 Miramar Pkwy., Miramar, FL 33023, U.S.A.)  
Most of this is much more laid back than other D.T.S. efforts I've listened to. Not that it's bad - not at ALL! A much more balanced effort that displays a range of musical skills that must be unlimited. Guests are far too many to list here - you'll have to buy the tape. There's a very interesting radio talk-show theme on one of the tunes that has the announcer outlining some rather unique thoughts on why God's been in business for so long - thoughts you certainly wouldn't hear on YOUR local station. The neat thing about D.T.S.'s production in this area is that it's CLEAR. So many of these cheapo productions with answering machines & such lose me right away, 'cause the guts of what they're trying to express is buried in static hiss from the answering machine, effects box, etc., ad nauseum. NOT here! The sax solos by Keshavan Maslak are superb! Those who said jazz is dead haven't listened to D.T.S. lately. Overall, he & friends provide a completely integrated listen, with experimental style/influence across the soundscape... HIGHLY recommended!  
-Rotcod Zzaj.

Thomas Dimuzio "19th Monkey Schism" (cassette, Xkurzhen Sound, 216 Adams St., Newton, MA 02158) Slightly older synth compositions by Dimuzio. Liner notes list a range from '86 to '88. Smooth and texturally even, strong sense of purpose, compositionally very good. Thomas is good at weaving a sound environ for the listener. On the other hand the pieces are not terribly "forefront", but perhaps they weren't intended to be. Notes list "Stithy" as "originally recorded as a soundtrack to interactive video for Don Ritter. In all, there are strong moods created, not at all unenjoyable. The sound quality is excellent, and the synths are not muddled. If you're looking for pieces to even out your headspace while writing or thinking, this'll do fine. Reminds me of some PBK pieces I've heard; serene, unrushed and pleasant.  
-Rotcod Zzaj.

Thomas Dimuzio "Sone Songs" (Cassette, Realization, 540 S San Clemente, Ventura, CA 93001)  
Dimuzio plays digital samplers and processors, 8 channel mixer and midi remote controller. No sequencers or background tapes are employed and all songs were recorded live to digital two-track. The live performances all occurred in '90 at the Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh, New Music America in Montreal, Generator Gallery in NYC (RIP), and the Sonic Disturbance Festival in Cleveland. His compositions are dense, energetic and noisy, with a few meditative interludes. A variety of sampled sounds intermingle with noisy timbres--human voices, percussive sounds, etc.. The pieces are very effective--perhaps his best recorded work. -RR

Divulgo (Magazine, 47 Rue de la Colommette, 31000 Toulouse, France)  
The first two issues of this mag offer about twenty pages each of underground and experimental music coverage, label biographies, miscellaneous writing. Number one included the Sub Rosa label, Discos Esplendor Geometrico, Whitehouse, etc.. Number two includes Freedom in a Vacuum, the Residents, RRRRecords, Staalplaat, etc.. -RR

Dougzig (cassette, Flying Bomb Cassettes, 277 Lake Ave., Worcester, MA 01604)  
More experimental madness from Flying Bomb, what I guess is Matt Towler's baby. He stated that Guitar Vomit and Dougzig were the first two Flying Bomb releases. Lots of vocal loops and repetitive phrases. The sound quality on "Dougzig" is nowhere near as good as the mix on "Vomit", and was just a little monotonous for my tastes. Yes, it IS experimental to be sure, but it could have been shorter. I think I'd skip this one in favor of Matt's other orientations. It needs a little more direction and focus. -Rotcod Zzaj.

Due Process "RRRadio 31-40" (CD, RRRRecords, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852)  
"Live broadcast, collage/plagiarize, various extract". Previous releases in this series have been marked by raw improv and a certain immediacy, while this seems more composed. Still, the disc will satisfy many noise fans. Sounds are both created by DP and borrowed from a variety of sources. My copy came with the first issue of RRRReport magazine, but it might be available as a separate unit. Rumor has it Due Process has discontinued its live broadcast/recording series. This may be the final episode. -RR



Geoff Dugan "The Aluminum Hallway" (cassette, 329 E. 12th st., #7, New York, NY 10003)  
A very well-executed collection of experimental compositions. Utilizes guitar, percussion, tapes, autoharp and voice. Ranges from industrial factoryspaces to futurprimitve ambient ritual songs. This tape held my interest longer than most. -RR

Dust That Collects "Black Water Delerium" (Cassette, c/o Ron McFarlan, 75 Kirknewton, Toronto, Ontario M6E 3X9, Canada)  
Elegant, ambient, minimal, electronic soundscapes dominated by continuous, flowing, dark textures. Perfect music for soundtracks to post-apocalyptic films and such. The title track fills one side of the tape and is more complex than the other pieces, relying more on factory-style noises and various percussive sounds. -RR

"Ecsatsy by Current" Various Artists (LP, Schizophonia, Grossbeerenstr. 90, 1000 Berlin 61, Germany)  
Included tracks by En Halvkøkt I Folie, Dissecting Table, Katharsis, Dead Tech, Illusion of Safety, YREF, In Slaughter Natives, Hybrids, Vidna Obmana, and Deleted. A nice variety of noise-based tracks, from meditative to rhythm-intensive to extremely chaotic. As with most recordings of this nature, high volume helps to recreate the intended mood. -RR

40  
Eel O. / Mortuary Attendant "Noise from Nowhere" (Cassette, New Flesh Tapes, 2837 NW 66th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73116)  
Industrial music? I don't know. There's a lot of socio-political stuff attached to Industrial Music as a historical phenomenon, and none of it applies to this tape. But then, the sound is more "industrial" than any cyberpunk group that has borrowed the term. One could argue that no real Industrial Music has been made since about 1981. Be that as it may, this tape sounds a lot like some of the records from that era. -RR

Einsturzende Neubauten "Strategies Against Architecture II" (Double CD, Mute Records, Dist. by Elektra, available in stores)  
A 90-minute anthology of works, common, rare and previously unreleased. This should give those unfamiliar with EN a comprehensive look at the scope of their work from 1984-90. Liner notes include nifty "insider" bits about each track. -RR

Electronic Noise Twist (LP, Vision, PO Box 568, CH-4005 Basel, Switzerland)  
Strong beats juxtaposed against power-electronic improvisations. The pieces contain bits of appropriated dialogue and squawlling saxophone blirbs. The beats aren't so catchy as to make the tunes danceable. The record advances noised-based music while acknowledging the influence of free jazz. Nice twist. -RR

Electronic Cottage (Magazine) (PO Box 3637, Apollo Beach, FL 33572)  
A crucial source of info about the home-taping scene, cassette culture and underground music in general. Within that realm, the coverage is vast. The most recent issue (#6, July, '91) included material on SHA 261, Jay Scott of Network 77, the home recording scene in Latvia, Murray Reams, AMK, MInoy, etc. The issue before this one included Henry Schneider, GK Jupiter-Larsen, V2, Alien Planetscapes, the Mills College Center for Contemporary Music, Don Campau, etc. Issues are up to about 80 pages now, with informative advertising, etc. -RR

"The Electronic Cottage International Compilation Cassette Series, Volume One" Various Artists (Cassette, Electronic Cottage Magazine, PO Box 3637, Apollo Beach, FL 33572)  
First in an extensive series; others should be available by now, but I haven't seen them. The names and styles are too vast to discuss in a few sentences. The concept is sort of like "open mic night" at your local bar--people do whatever they do, because they often don't have the opportunity to do it in front of an audience. There's lots of good work here, spanning the range of home-produced "cassette culture" releases. This eclectic tape is the perfect companion to EC magazine's coverage. -RR

Entre Vifs "L'Ordre Par le Bruit (CD, La Procédure, 6 Rue Rabier-F, 95170 Deuil, France)  
A limited edition (500) disc packaged in an LP sleeve. Four very intense, dynamic noise-based compositions consisting of many different electric and electronic sounds and treatments. The goal here is definitely maximum intensity, and high listening volume is suggested. Occasionally heard are screamed vocals and loops of recognizable sound. Reminds me of some of the more intense noise-makers of Japan. -RR

E.S.T. (Electric Shock Treatment) (Magazine, c/o Brian Duguid, G/L 128 Oran St., Glasgow G20 8LR, UK)  
I'm excited about the future of this attractive "electronic-avant garde-experimental-hardbeat-industrial" magazine. Mr. Duguid is off to a great start. In this ish, interviews with Robert Anton Wilson, Controlled Bleeding, Insane Music, lots of reviews, and various writing, including a piece on the use and abuse of fascist imagery in industrial music. Recommended. -RR

Experimental Musical Instruments (Magazine) (PO Box 784, Nicasio, CA 94946)  
The title of the magazine says all, subtitled "for the design, construction and enjoyment of unusual sound sources." This is perhaps the only magazine giving adequate coverage to new instrument design. Very useful. Here are highlights from several recent issues:  
September, '91: a history of color organs, instruments designed by Earthsounds, Peter Whitehead, sound sculptures by Ferdinand Forch, etc..  
June, '91: computer-controlled acoustic instruments, a history of the Het Apollohuis venue in Holland, a 6-year index of articles in EMI, driftwood marimbas, etc..  
April, '91: 19-tone guitar tunings, patenting for musical instruments, conjoined string systems, the acoustisizer--a miniature piano with guitar pick-ups.  
February, '91: feedback music, the small organ, glass instruments, musical bowls.  
December, '90: The From Scratch percussion ensemble, Matzaar and Alquit tone scales, cassette reviews, ancient greek instruments.  
October, '90: conceptual instruments, percussion aerophones, sax modifications, wound string calculations.  
EMI also distributes an annual cassette, sampling sounds discussed in a year's worth of issues. The most recent tape, Volume VI, includes David Myers, From Scratch ensemble, tentatively a convenience, etc.. -Ron Rice.



False Phonemes (Tellus Magazine) Various Artists (Cassette, 596 Broadway, New York, NY 10012)  
This tape has perked my interest in computer linguistics. Every piece here utilizes electronically generated voices in some fashion or another, from poetry readings to abstract voicescapes. The possibilities are truly limitless. Works here are by John Cage, Renko Scha, Paul Lansky, Alice Shields and others. -RR

Fluxtellus (Tellus Magazine #24) Various Artists (Cassette, 596 Broadway (602), New York, NY 10012)  
A sampling of Fluxus compositions demonstrating the range of musical and conceptual ideas to emerge from the historic movement. Non-traditional notations abound, the most minimal being the composition by Takako Saito titled "Sound Box" (the piece is an actual ball bearing in the cassette shell, played by shaking the shell). Most of the other compositions seem traditional by comparison, though intriguing performances range from spoken word segments to elaborate manipulations of non-musical objects (the highlight being LaMonte Young's ten minute "89 VI 8 c.142- 1:52 AM Paris Encore"). -RR

"Forced Cohesion" Various Artists (cassette, Complacency Prod., PO Box 1452, Palatine, IL 60078) This is actually two cassettes masquerading as one. Side A is a collaboration between Illusion of Safety and Switzerland's Runzelstirn & Gurgelstock, while side B is a live performance by Holeist. For side A, R&G created a backing tape and LoS added samples and other noises. The result is a rather psychotic listening experience. Noises rise out of silence, and other noises attack them from behind. Voices mumble, things break, and animals are tortured. Or at least that's what it sounds like. Side B is a recording of a Holeist show with Eric Lunde (formerly of Boy Dirt Car) and Dan Burke (of Illusion of Safety) in late 1989. This side is generally more cohesive. Slabs of sound, rumbling machine-like textures, mostly low-frequency vibrations. I preferred the B-side, primarily because side A, being a collage-like collaboration, just didn't hang together as well. It contained some nice sounds, but didn't grab my attention very well. Side B seemed a bit more direct. Both are well recorded and clear sounding, and the cover is nicely laminated with interesting graphics. -Mason Jones.

Fragment 2, with Agog and Zan Hoffman (Cassette, booklet, ND Magazine, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765)  
All of the projects to come out of ND are informative and well-presented. The Fragment series presents a cassette/booklet with each issue, which interviews two experimental artists and gives a sample of their work. I believe #3 is out now, but I haven't seen it. #2 features an untitled track by Agog and "Raw Felt" by Zan Hoffman. Both are complex, very creative experimental pieces. The work/interviews are worthwhile, and the mode of presentation is excellent. Recommended. -RR

"From Science to Ritual" Various Artists (cassette, A.I.I.P., c/o Uwe Hamm-Furholter, Taunusstrasse 63B, 5200 Wiesbaden, Germany) A live radio broadcast on RADIO X, Frankfurt, Germany. Some of the groups played were Whitehouse, Psycodrama, Culturecide, Vagina Dentata Organ, etc.. As a sampler of some of the newest producers of experimental sound, it fills the bill. Europe is indeed ahead of the curve in keeping the listener CHALLENGED. That a broadcast like this one is THERE, on the airwaves gives hope for those of us who know freedom is NOT related to stodgy Republican censorship and its tenets. There's really no way to lump this tape into a category, because it contains many styles of experimental music, from looped to dirge to white noise. The tape will hold intrigue for newthinking folks all over the states, as there are very few places in the good 'ol U.S.A. where such challenging sounds can be pulled right out of the sky! The variety alone is worth the purchase. My only complaint is that the sound quality is muddy in places. Check it out. Not for the timid! -Rotcod Zzaj.

Gargoyle (Magazine, Paycock Press, PO Box 30906, Bethesda, MD 20804)

I rarely cover poetry/fiction type magazines, but this one is worth looking into if you're into such things. A very large twice-yearly volume of poetry, fiction, interviews, art/photography, reviews, etc.. Number 37/38 was about 180 pages, well-designed, including people like Kathy Acker, Harry Matthews, Joolz, Lucia Berlin, and too much more to mention. -RR

Godsend (Magazine, Todd Zachritz, 1401 Fuquay Rd., Evansville, IN 47714)

The issues I've seen are colorful, rough and focused on experimental music. Number 13 was a small booklet containing only a nice little interview with Greater Than One. Number 16 was a more "magazine-like" issue, with Alien Sex Fiend, Illusion of Safety, If Bwana, His Name is Alive, reviews, etc.. -RR

Gregorian George "A Question of Brain Cell MUTation" (Cassette, Violet Glass Oracle, 5546 Harvest Ln., Apt. B, Toledo, OH 43623)

This continues Greg's tradition of releasing wonderfully complex surreal tapes. Recorded in the early morning hours of summer and autumn, '89. His songs incorporate a variety of electronic sounds, effects, processed spoken voice, etc.. The 11 tracks here span the range of sonic surreality, from ambient sleep sequences to chaotic multi-dimensional memory clusters, usually more toward the chaos end. -RR

Rudolf Grey "Implosion-73", b/w "Transformation" (7", New Alliance Records, PO Box 1389, Lawndale, CA 90260)  
Powerful guitar improv on both tracks, with accompaniment on one track by former Coltrane drummer Rashied Ali. I haven't heard Grey's "Transfixed" LP, released on New Alliance in '88, so I don't know how this compares. But within the realm of guitar-noise-improv, this is well performed and of good recording quality. The duet with Ali was too short for me. It could have developed nicely over the twenty minute length of an LP side. -RR



Hands To "Eurean Recant" (Cassette, Realization Records, 540 S. San Clemente, Ventura, CA 93001)  
This is some of the most powerful work from Jeph Jerman's Hands To project, all of which was aimed at research into the physiological effects of sound. Complex, textured streams of noise designed to affect bodily functions in some way or another. Powerful, ethereal, industrial. Play the tape loud, laying the speakers directly on your chest. Write to Jerman c/o Realization with any interesting results. -RR

The Hellfire Club "Last Temptation of Christ" (Cassette, PO Box 4585, Santa Clara, CA 95056-4585)  
Recorded live in '88 on KFJC-FM. This tape culled from a four hour preach-in performed by Lucifer Sam and the Minister. Samson pushes the pillars, and the temple collapses. Over 3000 Philistines died and went to Hell. Samson had repented of his sins before his death. Jesus Christ will slaughter billions of people at His second coming. All those who oppose him will be smashed. Either you will rule with Christ when you die or be with Satan in the lake of fire. Well done. Pay up. -God.

Pierre Henry "Variations Pour une Porte et un Soupir" (CD, Harmonia Mundi France, Mas de Vert, 13200 Arles, France)  
Originally released on Phillips in 1964 and in the U.S. on Mercury Limelight in the late 60's, this 1987 rerelease documents a very important example of French musique concrete. So why review a four-year-old recording? Simply because it's still available, and its future is questionable. Recordings such as this are generally of little importance to the music industry, and once out of print it may be gone forever.

Translated "Variations for a Door and a Sigh", the piece is perhaps Henry's most dynamic and lyrical, a culmination of experimentation dating back to his groundbreaking work with Pierre Schaeffer in the late 40's. "Variations" is a manipulation of only three sound elements: a sigh (breathing in and out), a sung sigh obtained by a kind of musical saw, and the infinite grating and squeaking sounds of a door in Henry's country cottage. The work was composed with only the resources of magnetic tape available in the early 60's (mixing, physical editing, varying loudness, pitch, rhythm, etc.). Nearly 50 minutes long, the 25 movements range from extremely sparse, minimal passages to what sounds like dozens of cellos and threatening vocal noise. Overall, "Variations" has a symphonic, nearly narrative flow as opposed to the choppy, contrasty sounds of most early concrete.

This recording also includes the fifteen minute "Voile d'Orpheus" ("Veil of Orpheus"), composed in 1953. "Voile" is one of Henry's earliest pieces of symphonic concrete, made memorable through the brilliant use of thunderous textures and distorted human voice. This package is not simply recommended, but VITAL to the understanding of Henry's contributions to contemporary music. -Ron Rice.

Hermanos Guzandos "The Worm's Turn" (Cassette, Guzbro Tapes, 721 N. Fairfax, Bakersfield, CA 93306)  
Curious, thumpy progressive rock. Some of the songs are strange enough to recall Tuxedomoon, the Residents, perhaps Captain Beefheart. This tape is creative in lyrical content, but basically traditional in structure. -RR

H.N.A.S./Vox Populi! "Face to Face, Volume 2" (LP, Odd Size Records, 24 rue de Laghouat, 75018 Paris, France)  
A wonderful split LP, presenting top-notch material from both groups. The H.N.A.S. set, recorded back in '88, includes two music-based pieces and three surreal experimental soundscapes. The Vox Populi! side, recorded in '88 and '89, presents a similar blend of rock and experimentation, though the sounds and moods are quite different--more percussive and perhaps a little "gothic" in orientation. -RR

Holy Terrors (7", Esync Ocular Interchange, PO Box 380621, Miami, FL 33238) Progressive rock. Guitars, bass, drums, vocals. An interesting interlude on one track. -RR

"Hypertronics" Various Artists (Cassette, Hypertonia World Enterprises, c/o Jan R. Bruun, PO Box 4307, Nygardstangen, 5028 Bergen, Norway)  
A variety of electronic and instrumental explorations from Charles Ditto, Le Mot and Kino, the Music Society, 23 Music, W.F. MacKenzie, Dino Oon and Konrad Kraft, Michael Briel, Andreas Bick, Anton Balsam, Featuring Karen Wheeler, Bruno deAngelis, Didi, Jeremy Clark, Idee du Femelle, and Lester Palocsay. What? I've heard of only a few of these artists. How about you? There are all sorts of tracks here, from minimalist musical songs to more abstract pieces. A nice sampler of little known musicians, though the recording quality is not great. Includes a complete address list--contributors come from Italy, Norway, Germany, Austria, USA, UK, Spain, Japan, and Canada. Apparently Hypertonia has released about 80 cassettes, so send for a catalog. -RR

If Bwana "Wah Yu Wan" (LP, Generations Unlimited, PO Box 540, Marlborough, MA 01752)  
Intense, varied, highly adventurous compositions. Instrumentation includes synth, samplers, violin, french horn, piano, piano board, clarinet, tapes, effects, sax, guitar, bass clarinet, oboe, didjeridu, cello and vocals. Yeah! Sort of a wild symphony in apocalyptic major. Tracks range from ambient, meandering dreamscapes to chaotic free-form warpspasm. -RR

Illusion of Safety/Big City Orchestra "Big City Orchestre-Illusion of Safety" (Cassette, Realization, 540 S San Clemente, Ventura, CA 93001)  
A mail collaboration conducted from January to March, '90. A variety of post-industrial soundscapes are presented here. Based on sound alone, the compositions are intriguing. But something's missing...documentation. There's nothing here to read except song titles. Both groups have created several excellent pieces on their own, and I feel the need to know more about the nature of this collaboration. Who did what to whom? And with what instruments? If you don't care about liner notes, this is a satisfying ambient/experimental recording. -RR

Kapotte Muziek "Real Time Music" (7" EP, Midas Music, address unknown; contact c/o Frans de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, Holland)  
Three noise-based compositions. Each piece is somewhat minimal, building an "environment" from a handful of well-placed noises. The longer piece on side B, "RTM 27XCA", is so simple and wonderful--a beating pulse fills the piece, and various noises are drawn to the pulse like a magnet. -RR



"Instrumain Handstrumant" Various Artists (double cassette, Stamp Axe, Poste 109, Station C, Montréal H2L 4J9, Canada) Packages such as this are few and far between. A limited edition (250) recording in a deluxe case, with a beautiful 80-page book. If after reading this brief review you're interested in buying a copy, do so as soon as possible--it's most likely almost sold out. The tapes contain three hours of music utilizing hand-made instruments, and the book includes pictures and text describing each piece. A total of 31 artists from 8 countries contributed to this project. Stamp Axe editor Pier Lefebvre acted way above and beyond the call of duty to compile the package. One tape is generally more ambience-oriented, while the other is more harsh. Beyond that, the variety of approaches is vast. There are too many excellent experimental works to mention here. Among the contributors are Luigi Bob Drake, Ruggero Maggi, Andrej Dudek Durer, Sticking Logos, Black Flowers, Norma Lacroix, Floating Concrete Octopus, and Agog. There are many artists I've never heard, and a complete contact list is included. The package is essential; it's a shame only 250 people will have access to it. Highly recommended. -Ron Rice.

Internal Fusion (Cassette, Desaccord Majeur, 56 Rue Louis Ruffel, 80080 Amiens, France) An intricate noise-based recording packaged in a plastic box with a few stickers. High volume reveals subtle layering and compositional precision. Moods vary, though certain elements recur, such as thick masses of grungy sound, lots of percussion, etc.. Simple melodic lines give certain parts an orchestral feel. A nice variation on the post-industrial aesthetic. -RR

It's Onomatopoeia (LP, Cheeses International, c/o S. Fricker, 515a Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 4AG, U.K.) Ambient electronic compositions. The use of delay and analog synth sounds reminds me a lot of Dr. Who soundtrack material, though these pieces have a more pensive flow. Mr. Fricker has successfully created an interface between surreal atmosphere and science fiction. The cuts develop delicately over long periods of time, resulting in extended, somewhat repetitive soundscapes. -RR

Tom Johnson "The Voice of New Music" (Book, Het Apollohuis Pub., Tongelreestraat 81, 5613 DE Eindhoven, Netherlands) Probably the oddest thing about this book is that it was published in Holland--the contents have originally been written as articles for New York's Village Voice magazine. The 543 pages contain about 180 articles, written as weekly columns from 1972 to 1982. Most articles report on musical events and premiers that are now of high historical importance and referred to as American Minimalism. In the early 70's, this was a nebulous movement that evolved in the lofts of lower Manhattan. Over the years its evolution became more complicated and far more artists were involved than is generally known. In Europe, the "Minimal movement" is mainly associated with a few famous names, like Philip Glass and Steve Reich. The author is a Minimalist composer himself, but his attention is focused on others of his generation, such as Alvin Lucier, Phil Niblock, Pauline Oliveros, Frederic Rzewski, LaMonte Young and many others. In '83 Johnson gave up journalism and moved to Paris to concentrate on composition. To preserve these important columns, the Apollohuis to bundle and publish them, which resulted in a fascinating historical treatise--not in terms of causes and effects, but in terms

of experimentation and innovation. This also applies to the style of Johnson's writing. The book contains no photo documentation, but it includes a nice series of drawings by the author, as well as a useful index. There are a lot of artists here that have been associated with other movements as well, which makes it a very adventurous experience to read the book as a whole. It's available in the US from Printed Matter, Spring Street Books, Music House, Two Eighteen Press, Lovely Music, and Th.Front, and in Canada from Marginal Distribution. -Anton Viergever.

G.X. Jupiter-Larsen 34 Essays (Book, ND, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765)

G.X. is the experimentalist's existentialist, and this 60-page volume presents ten years of writing, selected from booklets, magazine articles, liner notes, etc.. Described on the back cover as "free thought performed in a context of non-confrontational violence being both the aesthetic bias and the conceptology." I can't do better than that. What's left, except to ask the man himself? Says G.X., "Debate as the interconduction of independent events all oscillating in and out of a context of a relationship to all probabilities. This is how eye express myself." (from "The Totimorphous", 1986.) -RR

Klimpere "Gris-Nez" (Cassette, Violet Glass Oracle, 5546 Harvest Ln., Apt. B, Toledo, OH 43623) Playful, easy keyboard duets composed and performed by Christophe Petchanatz and Francoise Lefebvre. 22 short tracks in all. Occasionally a percussive instrument, guitar, harmonica, etc. is used. The compositions are basically traditional, but the bouncy sing-song approach gives the music a humorous, almost surreal feel. -RR

Takehisa Kosugi "Violin Improvisations" (CD, Lovely Music, 105 Hudson St., NYC, NY 10013) Kosugi is best known for his involvement with the Fluxus movement in the 60's, his band the Taj Mahal Travellers, and as resident composer/performer for the Merce Cunningham Dance Troupe. All of these accomplishments are definitely bigger than life, but on this recording he shows his most personal side in a recital of solo violin improv.

Kosugi's amplified violin sounds nasal, yet he generates warmth in his articulation. His bowing is best described as the continuous stroke of a paintbrush carving delicate curves. He rarely articulates individual notes, blending them as a painter blends colors on a canvas. The lines are in constant motion, floating from one area to another with gentle glissandos and glistening vibrato.

He uses artificial reverb on all tracks, which at times overpowers the violin as the notes wash together. This is probably what Kosugi wants, but unfortunately one digital reverb wash sounds like any other. Unlike most tracks on this recording, where the reverb sits at one continuous setting, the final track uses reverb as an improvisational tool, allowing the lines to evolve in different contexts. On another track he allows the violin to cut through the reverb revealing its grit, which becomes an integral part of its character.

In spite of his microtonal flourishes and use of technology, Kosugi is actually very conservative. His improvisations generally develop around a central note, branching out, exploring, then returning. A formal logic is also evident where variations take shape and converse amongst themselves.



He doesn't dabble in "extended" techniques, and there is little use of pizzicato (plucked strings) or alternate bowings. Instead it is the ebb and flow of his lines which reveals a kaleidoscope of human feeling. -Jim O'Rourke.

Largo "Tzu and Ko Songs (She-lover feeling)" (Cassette, Desaccord Majeur, 56 Rue Louis Ruffel, 80080 Amiens, France) This is the first cassette I know of to include colored pencils in the packaging. Nice touch. The song titles and various moods imply a sort of abstract storyline, and the sounds themselves are beautiful. Electronic sounds predominate each composition, and they range from moody ambient pieces to third-world percussive tracks to grand orchestral cuts. The songs are creative and the sound quality is professional. Recommended. -RR

Rob Lippert "Worth of it All" (Cassette, Sound of Pig, PO Box 15002 VanBruit Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215) Energetic (in places it really rips!) and pushing tunes that will please the ear of any looking for a little excitement to spruce up an otherwise dreary day/early morning...though in the case of the latter, you'd better do it with phones--your neighbors might come pounding on yer noggin'. Rob employs a broad range of amazingly realistic heavy synth sounds, and maybe even some real guitars, to create his own version of "Lush". In my ears, that's what would make me recommend his playing... his rich and dense textures on top of balanced drum sounds are especially attractive on "Foil Sensor" and "Circumcision Show", rescuing some of the other rhythmic structures ~~from~~ might come across as too standard for many in this readership. Titles that must mean something to Rob, as he says on the J-card that they are "mine, protected by .44 mag auto." Rob and friends demonstrate some real musicianship as well, sometimes a real rarity in the experimental forum. There are whole sections reminiscent of "orchestral" style, but not in a staid sense. Another fine release from Sound of Pig. -Rotcod Zzaj.

Frederick Lonberg-Holm "Theory of Motion" (CD, Pogus Productions, 151 1st Ave, #210, NYC, NY 10003, in association with Curious Music, 1849 Clarice Ct., Coralville, IA 52241) Wonderful avant-jazz with nods to many sides of contemporary music. Mr. Lonberg-Holm recently earned his Master's degree in composition, where he studied with Anthony Braxton among others (who makes a guest appearance here, along with William Winant). He also studied in NY with Noah Creshevsky and has previously released material through his own Collision Cassettes label. All but two pieces on this recording were performed live to DAT. The most extraordinary element of this release is his use of the electric cello, to extremely deep, sonorous, often gut-wrenching ends. Three solo works in particular explore the range of this instrument, from beautiful melodies to full throttle Harley-Davidson impressions. Also included: a duet with Braxton on tenor sax, four jazzy pieces for ensemble varying from three to nine players, and funky arrangements of the traditional "Shortnin' Bread" and "Tobacco" by Tobias Hume. For historical reference, "Theory of Motion" reflects some of the aesthetic concerns of 60's/70's jazz camps like the A.A.C.M. and the New Thing. Recommended. -Ron Rice.

Witold Lutoslawski "String Quartet", performed by Kronos Quartet (CD single, Elektra/Nonesuch, available in stores) For all the new compositions of instruments, electronics and tape introduced in this century, the string quartet has managed to flourish. It's a medium for some of the century's greatest works, from Berg's "Lyric Suite" to Cage's "String Quartet in Four Parts", and most certainly Lutoslawski's work of 1964. The classic recording by the La Salle Quartet has remained the standard to this day, and is now joined by this Kronos recording, which is part of their CD "single" series.

The "String Quartet" is virtuosic both in execution and design. One of the most revolutionary aspects of the score is how Lutoslawski will break the quartets unity apart by having the performers play lines out of sync with one another. To regulate this, one part will contain "cues" that give the other players direction. This allows flexibility from performance to performance, as four players will never play at the same rates twice. Additionally, repeated parts of varying lengths create a world of rhythmic complexity not easily achieved through classical notation (the effect is similar to the sound of four tape loops of different lengths). These techniques are good examples of what Lutoslawski refers to as "controlled chance", recalling the work of Cage, Brown and others.

Lutoslawski attempts to draw a "soloistic" quality from his players, which is generally subdued when musicians try to work together as a unit.

Kronos tackle this work with much vigor, as it is a formidable piece to overcome. The sound is very refined, which I have a feeling has more to do with production than performance (not to say anything of the Kronos' sound, but everything seems very compressed and at times unnatural--a sound many people seem to expect from the CD format). The performers never allow their respective virtuosic sections to overpower the piece as a whole. Tempos are taken with confidence, and all of the cues, starts and stops are executed flawlessly.

This CD is an incredible steal at the CD single price, and I would also recommend the La Salle CD on Deutsche Grammophone (CD 423 242-2) which contains this quartet plus others by Mayuzumi, Penderecki, and Cage. -Jim O'Rourke.

Margolis/McGee "Peat" (cassette, Electronic Cottage, PO Box 3637, Apollo Beach, FL 33572) Six ambient pieces featuring electronic and acoustic instrumentation--moog rogue and sonic six, vako orchestron, cello, french horn, etc.. Beautiful juxtapositions of big, rich flowing masses of texture and, well, smaller, tighter ones. Good use of sound sources, and nice compositions. There is a sense of intensity underlying the whole tape, of something large and powerful, just out of earshot. Recorded at Sound of Pig in NY. Recommended. -RR

Merzbow "Cloud Cock 00 Grand" (CD, ZSF Produkt, 7-32-14-105 Takinogawa, Tokyo, Japan) This is a collection of full-force experimental, noise-based compositions with considerable attention to percussion and complex rhythm. The five tracks include portions performed live between 1988 and 1990. One piece includes tapes recorded live at V2 and Diogenes in Holland. Merzbow frontman Masami Akita is no stranger to recycling old material and pumping it with fresh life. A limited edition CD-only release of 500. -RR



**Merzbow "Crocidura dsi Nezumi"** (cassette, Banned Productions, PO Box 323, Freemont, CA 94537; a joint release with ZSF Product, 105 Parkside Corp., 7-32-14, Takinogawa, Kita-Ku, Tokyo, Japan) Here noisegod **Masami Akita** manhandles an acoustic environment of drums, percussion and traditional Japanese instrumentation. Without electronics, the soundscape is more clear and precise than many Merzbow recordings, though no less moving than his usual "wall of sound". As with many works, he establishes a sort of junkyard groove on the drums only to obliterate the rhythm and disorient the listener. He then eventually rediscovers a funk/rock grind beneath the trash. The side-long pieces on this tape are layered with urgent attacks and decays of atonal and slightly tonal timbres, rich with immediacy and contrast. Though quite exciting, this release is subtle and listenable by Merzbow's standards, making it a good introduction to his work for those not accustomed to noise music. In the Banned Productions tradition, the tape is nicely packaged in an oversized sleeve, with an innersleeve and 16-page booklet collaged by Akita. -Ron Rice.

**Missing Foundation "Ignore the White Culture"** (CD, Restless Records, available in stores) As with their other records, this is angry, powerful, wall-of-noise music. Lyrics printed in the liner notes clarify the vocals, which generally can't be deciphered in the music. Here's a sample: "No governments work, start the mecca to a new island now! The earth is ugly green and brown, coming to you in a ball of fire." -RR

**Modern Taboo** (Magazine, PO Box 55138, Atlanta, GA 30308-0138) I've seen two issues of Mitch F.'s 8-page xeroxed music mag. They included reviews and writings about people like Death in June, Sol Invictus, The Happiest Place on Earth, etc. and various random writings. The second issue included perhaps 15 reviews and a few ads. -RR

**Morphic Resonance Ensemble "Morphic Resonance #4--Earth Night"** (cassette, Avatar Records, 2036 Wightman St., Pittsburgh, PA) Coined by **Rupert Sheldrake**, the term "morphic resonance" refers to the phenomenon where ideas are affected by the resonance left by previous instances of the same idea. Hmmm. This quintet takes its cue from the more cognitive side of the academic avant-garde to create crisp, sterile passages of improv and poetry. Having appeared on several cassette compilations, this is their first full-length release--two vocal and three instrumental pieces utilizing electronics, thunder, bass, trumpet, synth, oboe and piano. The mood is precise, elemental and considered, right down to the spoken words which are said without emotion by **Miss Yuh Wang**. The tape would be at home on a label like **Composer's Recordings, Inc.**--compositionally sound but lacking the emotive vitality to set it apart from all the other academic experiments. Recorded at CFA, Carnegie-Mellon University. -Ron Rice.

**Morphogenesis "Prochronisms"** (LP, Pogus Productions, 151 First Ave., #201, NYC, NY 10003) Often compared to **AMH** and **MEV**, this London-based contemporary ensemble makes use of traditional and prepared electric and acoustic instruments, a variety of found objects, and electronic devices. By definition, the term "morphogenesis" aptly describes their *modus operandi*--"the structural changes occurring in the

development of an organism." Similar types of sounds are present throughout the record, but compositional shifts in emphasis creates an evolution of sound where each subsequent piece has new colour. It's difficult to do justice to these works in mere words, but I'll give a brief outline: There are six highly emotive abstract improvs, not quite musical in nature, that read like minimal, expressionistic paintings (Kline, perhaps?). The teamwork here is exceptional--they feed off each other in a restrained way, occasionally breaking free of the "groove" toward more chaotic plateaus. Members are **Adam Bohman**, **Ron Briefel**, **Clive Hall**, **Michael Prime**, **Fred Sansom**, and **Roger Sutherland**. **Gen Ken Montgomery** and **David Prescott** each collaborate on a track. -Ron Rice.

**"Mouvements" Various Artists** (CD, La Legende Des Voix, 21 Rue 8 Mai 1945, 37270 Montlouis, FRANCE) A top-notch compilation of European experimental music. The work is generally more pensive than noisy, though a variety of abstract soundscapes are included. Groups presented are **Un Drame Musical Instantane**, **Muslingauze**, **Cranioclast**, **Asmus Tietchens**, **De Fabriek**, **Brume**, **Vriskika**, **Philip J.**, **Desaccord Majeur**, and **Zoviet France** (who present a highly-developed, 18-minute piece--one of their best works). A limited edition of 1000. -RR

**Music From The Empty Quarter** (Magazine, PO Box 87, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3HJ, UK) #2 includes news, pieces on **Sol Invictus**, **Black Tape for a Blue Girl**, the **Contempo Festival**, **Total**, **The State**, **Psyche**, **O Yuki Conjugate**, an old SPK interview, more than 100 well-written record reviews and about a dozen publication reviews. It includes a sales supplement in which you can find lots of new and used recordings--anything from **Art Bears** to **Z'ev**. I have one major problem with this mag--they don't print addresses with articles and reviews. You either have to do some research to get an address, or simply buy the product from their sales supplement. I guess that's the point. -RR

**"Music to be Murdered By" Various Artists** (CD, Bruits Blancs, 38 Rue des Soeurs Macarons, 54000 Nancy, France) This is a promotional collaboration between three Nancy-based independent labels, **Les Disques duSoleil**, **Permis de Construire**, and **Van D'Oeuvre**. It's a limited edition of 1000 copies. Though each label bears a fairly distinct identity, the combination of musical and abstract tracks flows adequately, like a progressive radio program (a rarity these days!). Included are tracks by **Dominique Petitgand**, **Geins't Nait**, **Laurent Pernice**, **Sprung Aus Den Wolken**, **Grill**, **NLC**, **Nox**, **Hanzel and Gretzel**, **Laurent Petitgand**, **60 Etages**, **Jagger Naut**, and **Pascal Comelade**. -RR

**Narwal "The Album (Old Hippies Never Die)"** (LP, Artware Productions, Taunusstr. 63b, 6200 Wiesbaden, Germany; and **De Fabriek**, PO Box 1135, 8001 BC Zwolle, Holland; and **Korm Plastics**, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, Holland) The packaging very convincingly emulates a late 60's homemade record--the sleeve folds out to reveal an astonishing psychedelic handmade poster. The illusion shattered, though, upon listening to the synth-based constructions on the record. It consists of two side-long pieces. "**Ademtocht**" is an eclectic assortment of odd soundscapes, laced together with atmospheric sounds. "**Nirvana**" is bound by a "theme"--it



successfully utilizes sounds we associate with hippie representations of nirvana. I don't think the band's intention was to parody hippiness, as you might expect. The sounds are handled respectively and the piece is very beautiful. I've never heard this group before, and there's no info on the liner, but perhaps we'll be hearing more from them. Whoever they are, they've captured the attention of some of the best european labels. -Ron Rice.

ND (Magazine) (PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765)

A long-standing small-format magazine covering experimental music, performance art, film/video, etc.. The most recent issue (14) included Carolee Schneeman, Scott MacLead, Lloyd Dunn, Mail-art in the Soviet Union, etc.. The previous issue included the Haters, PGR, VOx Populi!, La Sonorite Jaune, etc.. Issues are always informative and worth the price. A special videocassette issue should be available very soon. -RR

Phill Niblock "Four Full Flutes" (CD, Experimental Intermedia Foundation, 224 Centre Street, New York, NY 10013)

Niblock was born in Indiana, USA in 1933. Although he has been composing music (and making films, videos and intermedia performances) since the 60's, only two recordings of his work have been released until now. Earlier this year, the Experimental Intermedia Foundation decided to start a new CD label called XI with the intention of releasing the work of pioneering contemporary sound artists. This is their first release, composed in the early 80's.

The music can be described relatively easily: clusters of continuous tones which are close close in pitch (so called microtones). The pieces are layered via multi-track recording. Slow rhythms emerge from interference patterns between frequencies. The flute sounds are very close to sine-wave tones, which gives you the impression the pieces are synth-derived. Originally, Niblock planned to release these pieces as a 2LP set, enabling listeners to reinterpret the pieces by playing two pieces at once. This CD provides such a mix, but listeners are encouraged to tape the disc and experiment with remixes.

I only have one objection, and that's against Tom Johnson's statement that Niblock's music doesn't invite comparison. Generally I hate to compare musicpieces, but in this case a statement as such tempts me to do so: It strongly reminds me of Alvin Lucier's concept for his piece "Crossings". Or should it be the other way around? Both are from the famous New York lofts. A very specific type of minimal music, this either starts boring you after the first few minutes or you almost get hypnotized by it. -Anton Viergever.

Noospapers (Magazine, Suite 21, 215 North Ave. West, Westfield, NJ 07090)

The issue I have before me is #7. It's not the most recent, but it's the only one I've seen. However, it's probably representative of their output--a 50-page, photocopied journal subtitled "Maps, Manifestoes and Diagrams". It contains an assortment of verbo-visual poetry and art, and several well-written articles by Miekal And, Hakim Bey, Stephen-Paul Martin, Bob Black, etc.. It's the intelligence of these writers and the significance of their words, varied in scope and direction, that sets this mag apart from most. A good read. -RR

Note by Note: A Guide to Concert Production, Joanie Shoemaker, editor (Book, Redwood Cultural Work, PO Box 10408, Oakland, CA 94610)

I hesitated to review a technical manual, this being an "art" journal and all. But then I realized that one of the primary difficulties in exposing experimental arts to larger audiences is the lack of technical knowledge of production and promotion. This book is a must for anyone attempting to produce a local concert. It covers everything you need to know to coordinate even a large festival-type event.

The 275-page book discusses organizational problems (planning, working with artists, booking the event, performance spaces, tickets, etc.), publicizing the event (promotion, advertising, putting together a concert program, etc.), producing the event (staffing, sound, lighting, etc.), meeting special needs (visas, outdoor concerts, etc.). A useful appendix contains a bibliography and all the legal forms you need to do the job. I'm confident that the knowledge contained in this book can help give more experimental performers more audience exposure. All it takes is a few devoted fans willing to do the footwork. -Ron Rice.

Open Magazine (PO Box 2726, Westfield, NJ 07090)

I've only seen one issue--a 66-page glossy literary mag. It's attractive and well-conceived, and includes interviews with John Stockwell, and Noam Chomsky, poems by John Cage, photos by Sylvia Plachy, lots of fiction, poetry and art, and a few essays and reviews. The issue isn't thematic, but they do claim an ongoing devotion to "uninhibited forms of art and writing that inspire change, be they targeted at social processes or the consciousness of the individual". -RR

Ed Osbourn "Lennarcs" (cassette, Generations Unlimited, PO Box 540, Marlborough, MA 01752) "Trace Elements I and II" are complicated interactive computer pieces. These works defy strict categorization, so Ed's description from the liner notes is worth reprinting... "Imagine a set of four pictures of identical size hanging directly in front of one another in a dark room. The only illumination available is a pinpoint flashlight which will illuminate small portions of the frontmost picture (never very much at any one time). As time passes, parts of the pictures dissolve, revealing sections of the pictures immediately behind them...". The sonic identities of each "picture" are comprised primarily of hard-edged timbres, both tonal and atonal, that are very high in contrast (high frequencies against low, etc.). The compositions are crisp and vivid, but only after repeated listenings is the process of "dissolving and revealing" perceived. These works succeeded in broadening my perception of sonic space. Two other tracks are included on this tape. "Landing Gear" is a simple, elegant piece constructed from pink noise and delay. "Guitar Mechanical #1" utilizes guitar pickups as the source for a wide range of non-musical sounds. Generations Unlimited calls this tape one of their most academic releases, noting that Ed studied with Alvin Lucier and has worked with Ron Kuvila, Nic Collins, etc.. -Ron Rice.



Lester Palocsay "Artifact", "Hyperthrust" (cassettes, 3710 W 139th St., Cleveland, OH 44111) "Artifact" is a demo that the lead sheet said was "structured initially by experimentation with the idea of producing a pop tune...". Pop, it is. Nice song, but I'll leave it on the radio and turn the radio OFF, as I almost always do.

On the other digit, "Hyperthrust" is experimental at its best! Many new ideas here, firmly buttressed in Lester's quality synth work, strong drum patterns and apparent love of playing. Comparisons were made to Thomas Metcalf's fine synth work and structural frameworks. Not an unfair comparison, but Palocsay has his own style, and it will infect you! Work just jaded enough to stay out of the "classification" stage, but very pleasant to listen to. Many licks lean toward jazz without degenerating into mindless wandering. Very nice artwork on the covers, too. Lester's work is going to enjoy many spins on my deck, and it's worth your time and effort to check him out. -Rotcod Zzaj.

Pavement Saw "feed/symphony" (cassette, Turbine Cassettes, PO Box 4585, Santa Clara, CA 95054-4585) Another Pavement Saw tape, feedback extraordinaire; sure to be a treat for those recently released from an asylum before their time; now don't get me wrong, I'm just as much in to 'strange' as the next man (or woman, for that matter), but my orientation is too much toward body drugs to listen to this for any length of time. Side one is "feed", listed as a tribute to G.X., which I assume means in Jupiter-Larsen. Sounds like wires sparking, or an amplification of my bug killer. The second side is titled symphony, similar in nature to some earlier pieces by Anal Sadist, but 'fuller', if ya' know what I mean - not sure I do, it just seems to have more body. Out of the three tapes from Turbine, this was probably the one I'd listen to... when my psyche is REALLY twisted. Reader decision, based on their penchant for painful feedback experiences. -Rotcod Zzaj.

Pavement Saw "Pleasure Machine" (Cassette, Turbine Cassettes, PO Box 4585, Santa Clara, CA 95054-4585) Pavement Saw has a slightly better grasp of the use of repetitive feedback looping than some other sounds coming from Turbine, even some vocal/bird sound inserts. Guaranteed to wake you out of a sound sleep and KEEP you awake for several hours. My wife wants to lock me up in a loony bin 'til I send this back where it came from. For those of you really into repetition, you can check out these sounds on KFJC-FM in Los Altos Hills, CA on the "Hellfire Club". Cover's got a really attractive oriental woman on it--my assumption is that she backs up the title. And she does look like she's enjoying herself. -Rotcod Zzaj.

PBK "Narcosis", "Thrill Pictures" (Cassettes, PBK, 115 W. 33rd, San Bernardino, CA 92405-2505) Those of you familiar with PBK's work don't need a review. If you've enjoyed earlier releases, you'll love these. I chose these two titles because they're representative of PBK's later explorations (for those new to his work, start here). In a sentence, his noise-based compositions are some of the most exciting (high degree of cognition and emotion) out there. It's always hard to describe this sort of minimalist/maximalist music, so I won't even try. Just read the interview in this issue and order a couple tapes. These two quotes are appropriate: "Music is about changing

the mind, not to understand but to be aware. The understanding mind is what you get when you go to school, which is boring and of no use whatsoever. The experiencing mind is what we need, because it stands us in good stead whether things are going smoothly or not; it finds tranquility in the least tranquil situation" (John Cage, 1978). "I don't trust my imagination. I know what my imagination is, and what I'm interested in is what I don't know. The logical mind is offended when anything comes in that isn't within the range of its imagination, whereas the accepting mind is delighted" (John Cage, 1975). -Ron Rice.

Philip Perkins "The Remotes" (Cassette, Fun Music, 735 Spokane Ave., Albany, CA 97406) This was one of the first items I received for review after H23 #2 was printed, so it's now a little old. But it's still worth buying, for sure. Philip started doing his "Remote" performances in conjunction with radio stations back in '88. The pieces are performed via radio and incorporate tapes, local musicians and all sorts of live broadcast transmissions pulled in from the airwaves at the time of the performance. As of this recording, remotes had been performed at WLRN Miami, KPFA Berkeley, CUIT Toronto, KPFK Los Angeles, KGNU Boulder, etc.. All remotes are eclectic combinations of improvised music and sounds of our social environment. This recording is a continuous hour-long studio remix of several radio works. Philip gets an "A" for concept and execution. Recommendation. -Ron Rice.

PGR "Euphoria", b/w "Order and Chaos" (7", Silent Records, 540 Alabama, Suite 315, San Francisco, CA 94110) Improvised abstract music with prepared guitar and found percussion. This is some of the early work of PGR, a.k.a. Kim Cascone, recorded in '83 and finally released last year. These "solo" works (multi-track recordings of one musician) approach the improvisational complexity of groups like AMM. Delicate, intricate. -RR

PGR/Thessalonians "The Concentration of Light Prior To Combustion" (Cassette, Banned Productions, PO Box 323, Fremont, CA 94537) "...we were recording on one-inch tape, but not using all sixteen of the available tracks on the deck, so we doubled up on the tape. Seeing how the improvisatory nature of our music is made of lines of communication, I stumbled upon a gastly concept--taking two autonomous improvisations and mixing them to see what hidden dialogue would come forth...". That's the Thessalonians side. The PGR side was recorded live at Clubfoot, June, '86. Deconstruct...recode...subvert. Applause. Nice handmade packaging too. -RR

Stuart Pid "Distilled Water" (artists book, IZEN, PO Box 1157, Athens, OH 45701) An attractive verbo-visual work, printed on 30 5"x5" cards, bound by a black paper sleeve and packaged in a clear plastic sleeve. For bp Nichol, who wrote the original "Still Water". A description or criticism of the contents would be inadequate, because the value of the work is based not only on the work, but on the physical and conceptual position of the viewer, and on the physical and conceptual space surrounding the work. I'll simply say that page zero logically follows page zero, and so on. But each page is a complete verbo-visual work within itself, be it one word or twelve. -RR



Phinney/McGee "Skull" (cassette, Electronic Cottage, PO Box 3637, Apollo Beach, FL 33570) Chris Phinney of Harsh Reality Music and Hal McGee of Electronic Cottage magazine have teamed up again for another in their series of analog synthesizer cassettes. This one has them giving listeners a slightly harsher distorted space journey than some of their previous efforts. As with releases like "Shell" that were more dreamy and at times almost New Age-like, this one occasionally betrays McGee's power electronics past (as Dog as Master and in Viscera). The influence of groups such as Tangerine Dream and other analog synth "spacey" artists is clear, but few groups would create such on-the-edge sounds: repetitive waves of noise, occasional piercing trebles, and uneasy discordances. While this isn't powerful noise, it isn't something to put on in the evening to relax to, either. Because the sounds are more disturbing, this is probably my favorite of the Phinney/McGee cassettes. -Mason Jones.

Pieter's Mysterious Golden Friends (Cassette, 4233 York Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90065) The copy sent to me is "No. 8 in the first handmade edition of 27", though Pieter plans to release a larger xeroxed edition of this package. This work is strange--all aspects of the package are manifestations of Pieter's personal interests and aesthetic concerns. He's not part of any "scene", and this is his first project involving sound. The tape consists of simple two-track recordings of "human interaction with basic external objects of everyday life". The package includes a photograph, fancy paper, rune-like drawings with lots of images of snails, and a nice piece of writing on the artistic motivations and intentions of the project. A well-conceived and well-executed project. -RR

Poetry Devils "Performance" (Cassette, AMM, PO Box 27503, Austin, TX 78755-2503) Simple grungy rock. Reminds me of the old days of hardcore when it slowed way down, right after louder-faster-shorter was in. In other words, it's dated underground rock. Interesting lyrics. Good music, but for our purposes at H23, there isn't much here in the way of structural experimentation. Actually, none. -RR

David Prescott "Concentration/Combination" (Cassette, Sound of Pig Music, PO Box 150022, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

Recorded September to October, 1989; one solo electronic composition and one utilizing additional sound sources by about ten artists and some plagiarized material. The collective piece is like a drive down some cold, conceptual highway--a landscape filled with glittering futuristic objects and countless post-modern images. For all the vastness of the piece, it holds together rather well. The solo side is ambient and lively, emphasizing sharp-edged timbres and flowing energy fields. -RR

Prima Linea "Session 1986 Nitcheyo!" (LP, Front de L'est, 13 Rue Verrier Lebel, 80000 Amiens, France) Most of the music here is heavy beat-oriented "wartime" material, similar in some sense to the early work of Laibach. Horns, dialogue appropriated from political speeches, angry lyrics, etc.. A couple tracks extend this atmosphere into more abstract realms. The record is powerful and well-developed for those interested in this style. -RR

The Residents "Freak Show" (CD, Ralph/TEC Tones, 109 Minna St., #391, San Francisco, CA 94105)

Latest from the Rez, this is of course another thematic recording. Here, each tune is based on describing and/or telling stories about a freak in a side show, such as Jello Jack, the Boneless Boy. The set is digitally recorded, mixed and mastered, and much of the music is digitally derived via synthesizers and a sequencer. Their haunting style comes through, and the lyrics are intriguing, but the recording is definitely less experimental and more musically conventional than their classic recordings. -RR

Roadkill "Guitar Vomit" (cassette, Flying Bomb Cassettes, 277 Lake Avenue, Worcester, MA, 01604)

Liner notes say 'experiments in sound and noise', 'soundtrack for a nervous breakdown', and 'does to music what cars do to squirrels'. Maybe so, but if I was having a nervous breakdown, this would be an ABSOLUTE requirement. A 1989 release, this was pretty much a solo effort on the part of Matt Towler. He's gifted with a pretty weird sense of humor, even musically... in his own words, "Actually Roadkill was intended as a joke at first (it still shouldn't be taken seriously)." Now, there's an improviser after my own style. In the experimental realm, Matt's effort will fill the bill if you're really into 'sounds (mostly guitar & drum machines, with an occasional vocal loop/shout/etc) that REFUSE to be packed in to a tight little 'classification'. This is, indeed, nervous music and will shake the more conventional listener in his shoes; it's definitely not for everyone; but if you drink 5/6 cups of 'spresso a day like I do, then along about 2 a.m., this'll make ya' go drink another cup or two. Haunting isn't really the right word, but the whole experience is very fragmentary, and won't stop moving. If your spine tingles when convention is thrown to the winds, & ya' "get the spirit" when insanity reigns, this is worth a try. For a first release, this is fine! -Rotcod Zzaj.

Alexander Ross "Grandfather Paradox" (cassette, Generations Unlimited, PO Box 540, Marlborough, MA)

One big electric/acoustic/concrete composition split into two parts to accommodate the cassette format. It maintains a high level of energy and reaches out in many directions at once to incorporate a variety of sound sources. It seems to be a tribute to our power to observe the intricacies of our sonic surroundings. -RR

RotCod Zzaj and Jake Berry / Hypnosis, Pain and Placebos "Alien Tongues" (cassette, Zzaj Productions, c/o Dick Metcalf, PO Box 2879, APO, San Francisco, CA 96218)

This type of organic free jazz reminds me of work that sprouted from the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) in the late 60's and early 70's. Names like Art Ensemble of Chicago, Henry Threadgill, and Air come to mind. For those not familiar with this sort of work, I'm referring to a loose, naturalistic sort of improv that utilizes traditional jazz instrumentation and various percussive objects, whistles, blocks, etc.. One side of this tape presents Zzaj and Berry in a series of duets. The ensemble on side two performs two long tracks adding vocals, and all sorts of miscellaneous sound. -RR



RRReport (Magazine, RRRecords, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852)

Mr. Lessard's first issue of his magazine included a free compact disc (see the Due Process review) and a special issue of Holland's Vital Magazine. The rreport contained information about Switzerland's Schimpfluch, Japan's Hanatarash, Moslang/Guhl, Stories by M. Bohonus, the Pittsburgh experimental music scene, writings by GX Jupitter-larsen, Merzbow, Robert Rutman, and various artwork, comics and ads. In all, an action-packed informative attempt to give more coverage to the types of music you might find on a label like RRR. I hope to see future issues. -RR

Robert Rutman "1939" (LP, Pogus Productions, 151 First Ave, #201, NYC, NY 10003) Rutman's instruments are actually sound sculptures, steel and wood objects with attached strings and rods to be bowed. His improvisations date back to the 60's, when he was involved with John Cage, Merce Cunningham, etc.. The works on this recording utilize two or three instruments. "Tabla and Buzz Chime" is a humming, pulsating construction over an Eastern groove. "Steel Cello and Bow Chime" is ambient and flowing in a New Age style. "Chant, Bow Chime and Horn" could have been lifted from a Gyoto Monks record; the vocal implications of these instruments are enough to make you sweat. "Bow Chime Trio" takes up all of side two. It sounds like a string section tuning and detuning in simple time, though Rutman thinks of himself as a "primitive" and would surely deny the existence of even a simple composition. "1939" is his first record in over ten years, recorded live and mastered with the aid of Chris Bruce, Carsten Tiedemann, Danny Orlansky and David Prescott. -Ron Rice.

David Scurr "Raging Breakfast" (double cassette, DOVentertainment, 2 Bloor St. West, Suite 100-159, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3E2, Canada) A couple hours of good experimental composition--it's that simple. "Dial Positively" is a repetitive electronic piece using simple melodic lines. "Hummel's Day Off" is an energetic electroacoustic adventure, with noisy timbres, found percussion and lots of appropriated dialogue. "Spending the Day in Flagler City" blends nice melodic lines with streams of shifting electronic ambiances. That should give an idea of the scope of this recording. Most tracks are long and developmentally subtle, thus patience and attention is required to fully enjoy them. Certain unusual mixing techniques permeate the recordings, such as the use of extreme left and right positioning of elements in the stereo field. In all, if you enjoy extended works and minimalist aesthetics, this is excellent. If you don't, there are still a few tracks for you. -Ron Rice.

The Seventh Sister "Everything and Nothing" (Cassette, Vinyl Records, PO Box 1232, Madison, TN 37116-1232) "Beyond the boundaries of reality is a world in which thoughts and feelings are everything and nothing, the silent freeway is alive with action..." Wierd, electronic/electric rock with drug-induced lyrics and cut-up dialogue. -RR

"Sexual Immorality" Various Artists (Cassette, New Flesh Tapes, 2837 NW 66th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73116) A fairly well executed thematic compilation. Some tunes are industrial based, sexual in an abstract sense. Others are blatant. I found the abstract ones more interesting--more is left to the imagination. But if you're looking for frankness with regard to sexuality, there are many creative cuts here. -RR

Art Simon/Alva Svoboda "The Delicate Prayer" (cassette, Swinging Axe Productions, PO Box 199, Northridge, CA 91328). This somewhat academic composition in four parts recalls much of the less inhibited avant-garde work of the 50's and 60's by Ligeti, etc.. Texts by Svoboda, music composed, programmed and performed by Simon using synths, a homemade instrument called "the bug", and multiplexed shortwave fax transmissions. Svoboda's words are realized via the primitive intonations of an Amiga computer. Though often indecipherable, they are also printed in the liner notes. Here's a sample... "shield flame dove-tailed, phantom diagonal crate, tall logic republican tendons, fortune withdrew group waste." The "Bug", made from bolts, springs, combs and piano wires, produces sounds ranging from primitive percussion to Cag an prepared piano.

Three of the four movements are energetic and varied. One movement ties in with the others due to the Amiga vocalizations, but it is otherwise an unrelated study of just and equal temperaments. Perhaps this movement serves as a meditative pause in the eye of this particular storm. -Ron Rice.

The Single Eye (Magazine, c/o Allan Clark, PO Box 1415, Ssaation "H", Montreal, Quebec H3G 2W4, Canada) An intriguing, small (but growing) new music magazine. Number 1 (Fall, '89) covered a band called Bless, Scott Marshall, some art and misc., and a small review supplement. Number 2 (Winter, '90) added more reviews, artworks, etc., and interviewed Illusion of Safety and Lars Hollmer. Number 3, also published sometime in '90, increased in size to about 26 pages. It included even more publication and music reviews, Architects Office, Un Drame Musical Instantane, Merzbow, etc.. Each issue has been twice as good as the last, so I expect great things from The Single Eye. Perhaps other issues are available by now. -RR

Andrew Smith "Or/Dor - Flux - Meme", "Cosmic Panspermia" (cassettes, Sounds for Consciousness Rape, c/o Stephane Santin, 17 Rue de Lalande, 33000 Bordeaux, France) Andrew Smith made his mark on the international noise underground a few years back with the release of an LP (under the name Billboard Combat) called "Metastasis" and a 7" called "Boneyard". The former, released on RRR, had a playing surface which was covered with razor blades, chips of porcelain, paint and other flotsam, and helped usher in the current wave of anti-records that seemingly everyone and their uncle are conspiring to release. The 7", with a regular playing surface, was a powerful chunk of guitar noise that showed Andrew to have a talent for sound expression that went beyond his initial art-project anti-record.

Two years then passed without new word or work from Andrew, save for a cassette release titled "Etiology" that culled the recorded sounds of played copies of the "Metastasis" LP, and included an obscure booklet of his own writings.

Both of his new cassettes still find Andrew relying on his guitar and effects-pedals/boxes for the production of his brand of noise. "Or/Dor..." is a penetrating hash of all-out static noise--a sort of audio interpretation of Reich's concern about invading orgone and deadly orgone radiation. The sound here is not unlike shortwave radio noise. Due to the fact that the sound never changes throughout the tape (except for the tail end of side two), some will dismiss it as too simple or uninteresting. Those with a penchant for monotonous, violent noise will find it more



rewarding. "Cosmic Panspermia" contains seven tracks and is more varied than "Or/Dor...". These are towering soundscapes of feedback and distortion overload that are somewhat akin to the work of many Japanese guitar/electronic noise outfits, though there is a certain distinct character to Andrew's work that distinguishes it from the rest and avoids the pitfalls of genericism. Though none of the work on this cassette quite reaches the level of pure power and dramatic bombast of his "Overture Bacchanale" on the "Boneyard 7", this is still an excellent wall of wail. The accompanying booklet of difficult to read texts (thanks to Andrew's crummy handwriting) further delineates Andrew's philosophical concerns about various esoteric topics and how they relate to his noise. -Ben Gilbert.

Snatch the Pebble (7", Esync Ocular Interchange, PO Box 380621, Miami, FL 33238) Progressive rock. Guitar, bass, drums, vocals. -RR

Sonic Transports: New Frontiers in our Music, Cole Gagne (Book, de Falco Books, Suite 236, 111 East 14th Street, New York, NY 10003)

This 250-page, four part book looks at the works of Glen Branca, Fred Frith, "Blue" Gene Tyranny, and the Residents. It includes interviews with the first three artists, plus essays and discographies. Since the Residents don't do interviews, the author compensates with detailed examinations of many of their most important recordings, plus a comprehensive discography. By way of introduction, Gagne places the above artists into the context of avant garde music dating back to the work of John Cage and Harry Partch, though he notes that the Residents in particular like to think of themselves as pop musicians. Without going into detail, it's sufficient to say that this volume is a must for fans of any of these artists. The interviews are personal and enlightening. The essays demonstrate the author's well-developed sense of perception with regard to new music and his extensive knowledge of the history of these musicians. Recommended. -Ron Rice.

Sound Theater "Behind the Emotional Mask" (cassette, 3325 S. Woodmont Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45213) This project restructures and builds upon material from several previous Sound Theater releases. It's arranged as two continuous thirty-minute pieces designed for radio shows, installations and gallery presentations. For those unfamiliar with Sound Theater, the tape is a wonderful initiation--a vast, eclectic soundscape full of emotional vitality. Passages range from beat-oriented to dark spoken word to concrete and on and on. But don't think for a minute that the tape will lack a unifying "feel". Chief musician Reed Ghazala has said that his releases bear very little similarities to each other, but I would argue that in all of his modes of expression he has the deepest respect for the infinite and subtle nuances of audible sound. He pays attention to detail. On this tape, minute timbral changes are on equal ground with extreme ones, so listening at high volume with headphones is most rewarding.

You may want to explore other ST releases for fully developed works of a more specific nature. "Requiem for a Radio" is a gripping concrete work derived from the sounds of a radio being dismantled and based upon the classic Requiem mass structure. If this intense work is still available in its original form, it will include an informative booklet and a chunk of melted radio parts. "The Dreams that Insects

Dream" was sent to me as a work in progress; hopefully it's now available in finished form. It's a hypnotic, expressionistic interpretation of insect thought and imagination. I can safely recommend any Sound Theater tape you find. -Ron Rice.

Spiderbox "Man's On Control" (cassette, Perimeter Records, PO Box 28882, Atlanta, GA 30358)  
Caroline Cant, Mitch Foy & Keith Lee join forces with percussion licks, muffled bass sounds and droning/screaming voices to while away 45 minutes of your time... oh yeah, it's random, bells and all, with a little crude language mixed in to catch yer attention (if you kin hear them through the feedback & low-end muffled mix), but all in all, it's too rough on the mix for my ears. Experimental? No doubt, & they do have some novel combinations; what sounds like a dentist's drill eatin' away at yer brain, with some above average percussion! Now, I can't claim that I haven't experimented around like this, 'specially in jams along the years, but not for release... the energy is there, smashing, crashing, legions of demons there to bust yo' haid - but, hell, all I have to do is listen to the latest Republican war for that. Not my cup of tea, tho' I suppose there'll be some of you who EAT IT UP! Like I said, I've done this stup before (when I was REALLY pissed), but I wouldn't burden anyone else's ears with it. Sorry, folks, not recommended. -Rotcod Zzaj.

Static Effect "Axis of Rotation" (Cassettes (2), Swinging Axe Productions, PO Box 199, Northridge, CA 91328)  
Packaged in a nice plastic case in the Static Effect tradition. These compositions seem more controlled, less improvised than earlier efforts. In any case, Greif and Bohonus work so well together that it boggles the mind. This is one of the most intense, effective examples of Surreal music I've heard. Blends all sorts of sounds, samples, bits of traditional music, etc.. Similar to the way dreams combine old memories, recent happenings and things we've seen on TV, etc.. Various rhythms provide a visceral flow and a sense of cohesion. Highly recommended. -RR

Static Effect "Tower of Iron" (Double Cassette, Swinging Axe Productions, PO Box 199, Northridge, CA 91328)  
Recorded September, 1989 and packaged in a nice plastic case. I believe this was the first release by the collaborative "group" known solo as Randy Greif and Mikhail Bohonus. It's wonderful, pounding electrotribal music with samples, obscure noises and surreal ambiances. The two improvise very well together, as all the sounds here are spontaneous and unrehearsed. -RR

Static Effect "Certain Random Firings" (LP, Swinging Axe Prod., PO Box 199, Northridge, CA 91328)  
"I see nothing wrong with opening the windows on the broadest utopian landscape in order to make this animal world understandable. An era such as the one we are living in can tolerate any and all departures for voyages à la Cyrano de Bergerac, à la Gulliver, so long as the aim of these eras is the defiance of all conventional ways of thinking, a defiance that we obviously lack. And the great possibility that we may get somewhere, after certain detours we will have had to make even in a country more reasonable than the one we are leaving, is not excluded on the voyage that I am inviting you on today." -Andre Breton.



Stipes & Pabulum "Vestal" (cassette, Sonic Delights, South Orange, NJ 07079)

An excursion to nowhere; another sound collage, lots of found sounds from radio, freeway & who knows where else. There are also some nice spoken word pieces (which makes it all more enjoyable for me) and enough sonic shifts (from quiet to absolutely MONSTROUS) that I never got bored. Artist's description on the flyer that came with it of "abstract sketches, with sound rather than pictures on words" is certainly apropos. There are some gaps in the sound I'd rather have done without, but usually only at the ends of sections. A novel listening experience, though the recording (& maybe the cheap tape) make it one that could have been a little better, I think. For folks who want a little "music" mixed in with your madness, I suspect this won't be a rave; but for those of us looking for challenging sonic environs, Vestal will fill the bill. Creates a "good" feel for me, & not so screechy that I can't enjoy what I'm doing; better than just 'background', though. These folks enjoy what they're doing, & it comes through. Good tape, though not for the timid! -Rotcod Zzaj.

Karlheinz Stockhausen "Mantra" (CD, New Albion, 584 Castro, #515, San Francisco, CA 94114)  
Not a reissue, be a new recording of a piece originally released in the early 70's. For two pianos and electronics, this recording deemphasizes the electronics compared to the original. Somewhat minimal, ambient. Liner notes contain an essay by Reinhardt Oehlschlagel, biographical info on Stockhausen and the performers, and an excerpt from "Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness" by Satprem. This writing links Stockhausen's work to eastern theories of vibratory modality and planes of consciousness (mantras which heal, etc.). -RR

Lo Straniero (The Stranger) (Magazine/info sheet, via Chiaia, 149, 80121 Napoli, Italy)  
"Founded in 1985 by Ignazio Corsaro to be the mega-zine openly estranged from the dishonesty of the honest". About 10,000 copies are circulated of each issue of this 20" x 28", 4-page newsletter (text in english and italian). It's devoted to estrangement in the artworld and elsewhere. Hundreds of contact addresses, newspaper clippings, ads and artwork. I guess the newsletter is free, but you should send a few bucks. It all comes out of one man's pocket, and I'm sure he could use some help covering his costs. Quite a dedicated rexnation against established art-systems. -RR

Sudden Infant "Sound of Broken Glass" (7", Schimpfluch, c/o Invluss, PO Box 4804, 8022 Zurich, Switzerland)  
"Destruction means progress. Progress means beauty. Beauty only exists in action." One-sided 7" documenting a live performance in Aarau, Switzerland back in August, '89. Only 300 copies were made, with booklet and pieces of glass. The recording is simple and direct--as was the performance. Only the sound of glass bottles being thrown into a pile, breaking, clinking, crashing, plus the sound of wind blowing across the microphone. -RR

"Surreal Dreams Purge Nihilist Nightmares" Various Artists (Cassette, Violet Glass Oracle Tapes, 5546 Harvest Ln., Toledo, OH 43623)

The title appropriately sets the stage--some ambient, some song-based, some difficult to categorize. Works by Proof of Utah, Illusion of Safety, Abner Mality, Vidna Obmana, Hybrids and many more. -RR

Survival Research Laboratories "Illusions of Shameless Abundance, Degenerating into an Uninterrupted Sequence of Hostile Encounters" (Cassette, Charnel House Productions, PO Box 170277, San Francisco, CA 94117-0277)

You've seen the videos--extremely powerful performances of maniac machines and such. Now try on this audio cassette for size. The audio stands surprisingly well in the absence of visual information. You're definitely aware of the sense of "performance" here--more than pure sound-based composition. Your creative juices will flow imagining the smell of engine exhaust and gunpowder and the destructive sights that must have been seen at this performance (recorded live in SF on May 28, 1989). No document can replace the experience of being at an SRL performance, but this is a powerful tape. -RR

Cecil Taylor "Looking (Berlin Version)", "Looking (Solo Version)" (CD's, FMP, Behaimstrasse 4, 1000 Berlin 10, Germany) Two years ago, FMP blessed Cecil Taylor fans with an immense collection of CD's, all recorded at "Improvised Music II/88", where Taylor was guest of honor, sparring with some of the great improvisers of our day. One CD that shone brightly was Taylor's duet with percussionist Tony Oxley titled "Leaf Palm Hand". It was noted for its relentless drive and virtuosity--an intensity so consistently high that one must refocus his perceptions of nuance and dynamics to almost microscopic levels, ironically in the same way one would listen to Morton Feldman's music.

"Looking (Berlin Version)" reunites Taylor and Oxley, along with bassist William Parker in a set recorded November 2nd, 1989 at the "Quartier Latin" in Germany. The trio produces some of the highest energy music Taylor has released as late, matched only by the aforementioned duet CD. At times the three reach a virtual cacophony, a miniature world of sound. Oxley's colorful use of cymbals and odd "cowbells", Parker's mastery of the bowed bass, and Cecil's lightning fast flourishes reach a blur. At times it seems as if Taylor's ideas need to rush out faster than his fingers can act, so they act out their frustration in huge clusters of sound. The trio is like a pack of wolves, ferociously devouring rhythm, texture and melody thrown their way. But there is also an underlying playfulness amongst the three. When the dust clears, Oxley's rivet cymbals sizzle and resonate, like dust settling on the ground after an immense explosion, now only surrounded by quiet.

Also new on FMP is Taylor's solo outing, "Looking (Solo Version)", recorded the day before the trio set. Here Taylor performs in a more compositional setting, similar to "For Olim". Most striking is his use of silence in his opening statements, utilizing chords usually reserved for later in the piece. This CD was released just before my deadline, so I cannot speak with much authority on the whole CD, but hey, let's be honest, does anyone expect Taylor to make a bad record? Also of interest to Cecil Taylor fans will be the reissue of "Garden" on Hat Hut. -Jim O'Rourke.



Tinnitus "Straight From the Head" (cassette, Perimeter Records, PO Box 28882, Atlanta, GA, 30358)  
 Scott Ewen Jackson (name right?, couldn't tell from the insert sheet), and Kevin Cummings sculpt sound environments for you in the finest traditions of exploration. Synth and treated sounds for your pure pleasure (or sheer terror, maybe). Sound quality and followthrough are excellent all the way through the tape, and what they're doing with broad sweeps, cut sounds and clear focus will definitely influence your output. Their textures are full-bodied and all-encompassing, but not boring in the least. I had read quite a few of their work before, but this is the first time I've actually heard them. Strongly reminiscent, for me anyway, of some of the more experimental players I listened to and played with in the Olympia, Washington area in the early '80's. An excellent showcase for Tinnitus' unique sonic signature. Anyone interested in electronic ambience with new directions every moment will enjoy this. RECOMMENDED! -Rotcod Zzaj.

Trance "Purity" (Cassette, Charnel House Productions, PO Box 170277, San Francisco, CA 94117-0277)  
 Eleven pieces of audio noise incorporating (I'm guessing) radio or television static and broadcast transmissions, electronic noise-producing devices, echo and distortion effects, and perhaps an electric guitar. It's difficult to say exactly what is being played, because the heavily charged sounds melt into seamless streams of electric noise. The only identifiable sounds are voices that have a tv/radio feel. -RR

Trelops Treyfid "Fisty Stealth" (cassette, Poison Plant 2400 Commonwealth, Alexandria, VA 22301) Well here's Trelops again, this time with G. Fox and S. Trezona. Available from Poison Plant, this is another fine collection, though it doesn't seem quite as energetic as "The Crushing Evanescence". The sounds, including bells, synths, nice percussion and some chant/vocals, are just as professionally mixed; it's a real mixed bag, perfect for mental excursions. It might not have had exactly the same VERVE for me, but all in all, this is still FINE music. As with any experimental music, the listener should not expect a comfortable pattern to emerge... or if it does, EXPECT it to diverge. What separates this from the rest of the chaff in my mind is the obvious attention to detail. You certainly won't be disappointed with this one, unless AM/FM drive is your cup of tea in the first place. -Rotcod Zzaj.

"The Crushing Evanescence" Trelops Treyfid (cassette, Poison Plant Music, 7 Woodsend Place, Rockville, MD 20854)  
 Excellent production from Trelops, as Triptic of a Pastel Fern, a name many of you have probably seen before. On this one, David Aub contributes significant vocal skills to add a wonderful expansion to the already wide-reaching panoramas created here. Never a dull moment; guitarz, found sounds, the aforementioned vocal excursions all combine to make for a truly NOVEL experience. You die-hard 1/4/5 pattern fans who jus' cain't get 'nuff of the same ol' will choke on this one. So, to enjoy what's happening here, you'll have to be truly dedicated to non-dedication... free enough to 'roll with the weave. The more I listen, the more I like. Oh, yeah, it's got plenty of loops, but this is conceptual - in a certain sense, anyway! Not an hour of boredom from another pattern freak! This is music ya' kin' TASTE!

& believe it or not, there IS some musicianship there. Slow builds to frenzy previously unheard. Will definitely amplify your present state! GET IT! -Rotcod Zzaj.

Trig Ptoma "Undercurrents" (cassette, Pirhana Productions, Bill Jaeger, 506 W. Johnson Dr, Payson, AR 85541)  
 VERY nouveau, as the liner notes said, "made by physically destroying acoustic sound sources, with conventional instruments being NONE"... couldn't have said it better myself. '87 vintage excursions through what Y & Z (the artist) call "remote locations", it's just chock full of percussive sounds, hyped vocals and a sheer invading wall of "something" that runs in & out of the mix for a truly new experience. Production quality is excellent, & it sounds like these folks were enjoying what they were doing. I did too! Titles leave a bit to be desired (stuph like 119 APU 77 & 47539 GXB - I'm not kidding), as I feel like the headspace they were in when these were put together must've been somewhere in the neighborhood of psychedelic (desert mushrooms & all), but I guess I can't have everything, right? All in all, though this is not a CLASSIC for me, I really enjoyed the experience, & would like to hear more. As noted above, the production values & continuity of ideas make it a much more enjoyable tape than some in this vein. Even though it's '87 vintage, it feels like a trip through Saudi/Kuwait during the recent debacle there, tanks, sand & all. Mebbe Y & Z are pre-cognitive, eh? Recommended! -Rotcod Zzaj.

Ultimatum II, with John Berndt and Tentatively, a Convenience (Cassette, Widemouth Tapes, PO Box 382, Baltimore, MD 21203)  
 Berndt, a.k.a. Karen Eliot, Monty Cantsin and Charles Boyd, presents "Dialectical Immaterialism", self-described as "a foray into self-referential brain-washing". Tent's piece is called "Generic As-Beenism". Both are documents of complex audio-visual performances that don't really lend themselves to description or criticism. Both incorporated visual elements with various instrumentation and extended spoken passages. Both are highly personal, creative experimental works. Luckily, the package comes with extensive documentation (and a couple attractive photos) to fill some of the gaps in our understanding. I won't attempt to explain the package. I'll just say that I enjoy the tape, and I wish more artists would document their work in this manner. Recommended. -RR

Un Drame Musical Instantane "Què Vive?" (CD, Grrr, 63 Boulevard de Menilmontant, 75011, Paris, France)  
 The translation of the band's name, "an instantaneous musical drama", more than adequately describes the work of this extremely creative trio. Their work straddles the line between avant-garde jazz and musique concrete. As with any complex drama, elements of humor, anger, craziness, seriousness abound, as well as bits of noise and surreality. For those who read French, the liner noted provide plenty of information about the pieces on the disc. -RR

Usward "Dimension 12 Manifestations" (Cassette, Violet Glass Oracle, 5546 Harvest Ln., Apt. B, Toledo, OH 43623)  
 Very good surreal music. From the liner: "Usward is a dream that occurred a long time ago. The sound that you hear is only partially representative of what actually is. The music is invisible." Ambient electronic sounds create dream beds



for other strange electronics, found percussion, and lots of manipulated spoken word vocals. Foggy outstretched arms with silly fingers. Nice song title award goes to "Lotus Flowers Floating on a Sea of Gelatin." -RR

Vidna Obmana "Near the Flogging Landscape" (Cassette, Violet Glass Oracle Tapes, 5546 Harvest Ln., Toledo, OH 43623) Electronics, loops, tapes, and acoustic treatments are used to create perfect, slow-moving masses of post-musical sound. By "post-musical", I mean the melodies are there, the percussive beats are there, referencing a sort of rhythm. But the sounds transcend music in the traditional sense to become pure, shifting ambiances. This work functions parallel to, but not in conjunction with, some of the more honest examples of New Age music. -RR

Vidna Obmana "Revealed By Composed Nature" (LP, The Decade Collection, Parijslaan 173, 2710 Hoboken, Belgium)

To obtain the value  
of a sound, a movement,  
measure from zero. (Pay  
attention to what it is,                      A bird flies.  
just as it is.)

From "2 Pages, 122 Words", by John Cage. -RR

Vital (Magazine, Fwanz de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, Holland)  
This 8-page mag covers experimental and noise-based musics. They seem to publish quite often. The latest I've seen is #16, with Das Synthetische Mischgewebe, Edition RZ, news and reviews. Each issue contains one group interview and one label spot. #15 included Thu 20 and Lovely Music. #14 included Con-Dom and Silent Records. #13 included Gregory Whitehead and Cthulhu Records. #12 included Doc Wor Mirran and Generations Unlimited. That should give you an idea of the scope of Vital. Always well written, each issue includes news and about 7 or 8 informative reviews. -RR

Wallmen "Nemllaw: You are the Wallmen Today" (cassette, Jethro Deluxe, 7711 Lisa LN., N.Syr., NY 13212)  
A collection of very wierd, mostly rock-based songs. This recording is like an acoustic, folkie cousin of middle-era Residents. -RR

John Watermann "Ambiguity" and "Dummyhead" (CD's, Nightshift Records, GPO Box 2998, Brisbane 4001, Australia)  
Watermann's approach to composition is based primarily on the manipulation of small pieces of dialogue. Most phrases seem to be appropriated from new-oriented broadcasts; themes range from police reports to ranting about aliens to TV commercials. He processes dialogue in various ways to produce astounding, sometimes gut-wrenching timbres--occasionally the sounds only vaguely resemble speech. He recombines words and phrases in surreal compositions apparently aimed at reexamining our relationship with mass media. Most of the voice manipulations are presented as brief explosions of dialogue, set against minimal, post-industrial atmospheres. Watermann's liberal use of silence is exceptional, and he exercises a great deal of restraint in the placement of electronic and sampled sounds. Overall, the disc demonstrates great precision and creative ability, and the sound quality is very professional throughout. -Ron Rice.

Whitewalls (Magazine) (PO Box 8204, Chicago, IL 60680)  
A very well-conceived thematic "art journal", subtitled "a journal of language and art". Number 28 (summer, '91) focuses on identity and self-definition--more specifically, various expressions of artists' ethnic identity. Number 27 (winter, '91) titled "Rants and Regrets", took a more open stance to include topics such as feminism, abortion, gentrification, and television's role in forming political agendas. Number 26, called "Petty Crimes for the Common Good", sets an interview with a professional thief against various artist's attempts at creating change. All issues contain top notch writing and nice photography. -RR

Yximalloo "15 Songs" (Cassette, Sakura Wrechords, Ishii 305, Minami Izu, Kamo, Shizuoka 415-03, Japan)  
I hesitate to categorize this tape, and that in itself should serve as a recommendation. It's very difficult to describe--no specific style permeates the recording. BUT often heard are primitive, simple rhythms, intricate percussion and eerie unintelligible male vocals. I want to draw some sort of connection to the Residents, though this music is more primal. Where the Residents use pop culture and mainstream musical sensibilities to subvert these conventions, Yximalloo's brand of subversion is more abstract. If this description sounds vague, all the better, because this music possesses something crucial yet difficult to grasp. Oh, and by the way, this tape has been kicking around for almost ten years! They recorded the tunes in '81 and '82. Wait! This just in. Yximalloo sent me another more recent recording just in time for this issue. It's called "Techno Temple Choir", originally released in 1984. It too contains many wonderful pieces similar to "15 Songs", with the added benefit of better recording quality. -Ron Rice.

Zone "Born of Fire" (CD, Potentia, 12 Martell St., Fforestfach, Swansea, SA5 8HX, U.K., or MMM, C.P.54, 80100 Napoli, Italy)  
On their newest recording, Zone polishes and refines, allowing their message to come across clearly and concisely. The book accompanying the CD is written in three languages--English, Italian and Japanese--which is representative of Zone's attempts at creating a world audience. Utilizing texts by Gurdjieff and other mystic/spiritual sources, they further illustrate their recognition of "the apparently differing individual, social and religious needs inherent in all cultures as permutations upon the central need for love, life and light."

Musically, Zone's work has grown considerably since their 1st LP, "Sword of the Sun". While the use of Gregorian chant in popular and experimental music has usually been boring, it is refreshing to hear Zone use it in such an enchanting and inventive way (at the beginning of the first track, "Beautiful Machine"). By layering different chants together, they create an altogether moving experience, very controlled and thought out. This music shows an incredible amount of care and attention to detail. "Beautiful Machine" flows effortlessly from 13th century voices to 20th century synth and back again, demonstrating their ability to combine distinct elements. Sounds return, transformed, assuming different roles, becoming one with the whole. Most striking about "Born of Fire" is the sincerity with which Zone uses the sounds of various cultures, as in "Heart of the Atom"'s use of Asian flutes and percussion. Their care and understanding undermines any feeling of cultural imperialism, emphasizing the goal of Zone--a world understanding. -Jim O'Rourke.



## In Closing...

Many years ago, Tentatively, a Convenience released two wonderful, minimal tapes. They were not met with much enthusiasm in the music/art world, for several reasons. However, they represent a unique and important approach to the "minimalist aesthetic", and they are still available. The concerns elucidated in these tapes are still of significance, especially in the context of this issue of H23. I urge you to buy copies from Tent at PO Box 382, Baltimore, MD 21203. What follows is a letter Tent wrote to a dissatisfied customer, regarding the minimal tapes.

dear joe,

I've postponed responding to your letter expressing disappointment because I want to try to explain my two tapes that you don't like in a way that will make them more interesting to you. And considering how deliberately formally perverse they are in relation to the music context that I imagine you might be trying to place them in, my task won't be easy.

[illegible]

These tapes have attempted to be experiments in a form of hyper-amplified lowest common denominator crudity--sort of like hind-brain noise--the inane hummings of a broken culture, magnified ad nauseum on a barely functioning prototype xerox machine meant to be played forever. I'm sure that makes it all perfectly clear now, eh?

Should poor people without access to hi-fi equipment be discouraged from recording and disseminating? It seems to me that some things need to be distributed independent of fidelity criteria, and there is information intrinsic to low-fi. Indeed, the low-fi enhances the conceptual obstacle course. Such a comment applies perfectly to "side 1/side 2"--"side 1" is simply self-contained machine noise... In late '79 (when it was made) the extent of my recording equipment was two broken reel-to-reels. One of them could record and play on both channels, but the motor didn't turn the spindles.







the IRS). Of course it's questionable how much of this you can tell from the recordings. How much do you need to "know" in order to be able to appreciate it? It is my contention that you don't need any of this explanation if you simply listen with the understanding that the inanity and the tedium of such an "unpromising" focal point as 2 letters repeated as many times as the margin settings that my typewriter happened to be set to at the time would permit, is an inanity meant to break the rules that would inhibit the latent creativity of the "untalented". To me, this stuff is much more creative than anything on top-40 radio--it's below the lowest common denominator!

Sincerely,  
Tentatively, a Convenience

End.

---

## the seventh sister

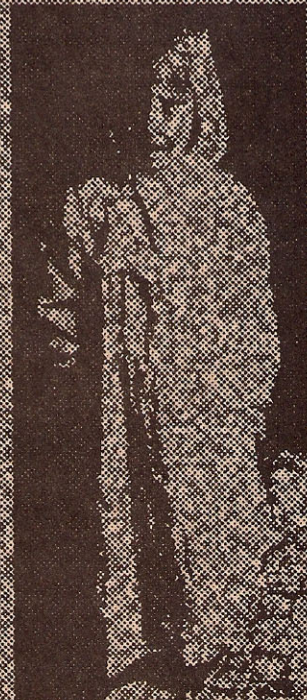
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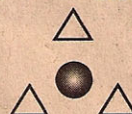
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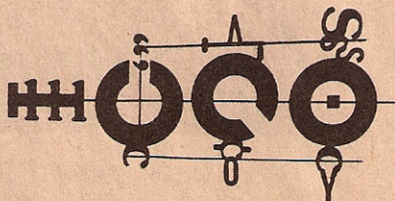
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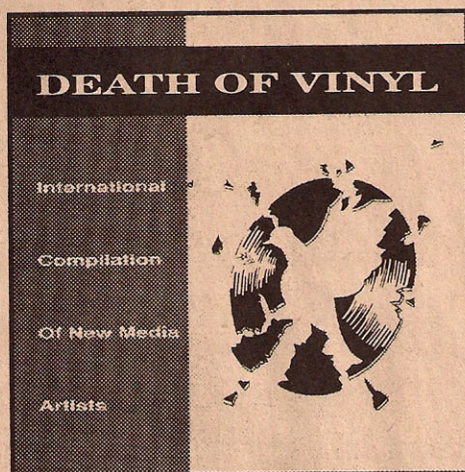
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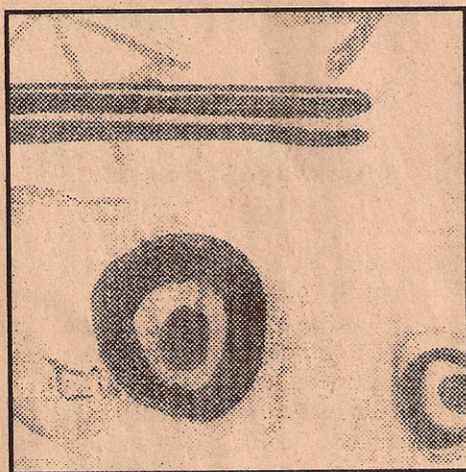
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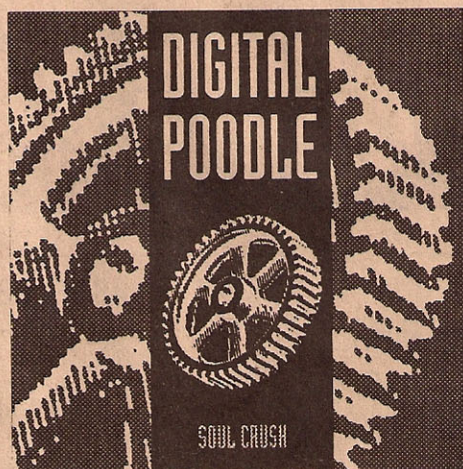


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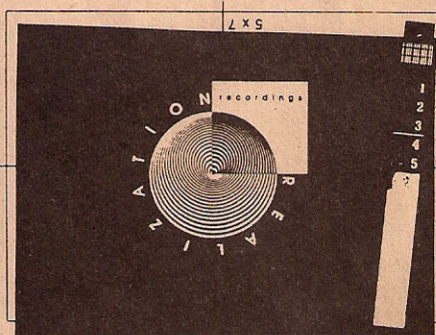
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